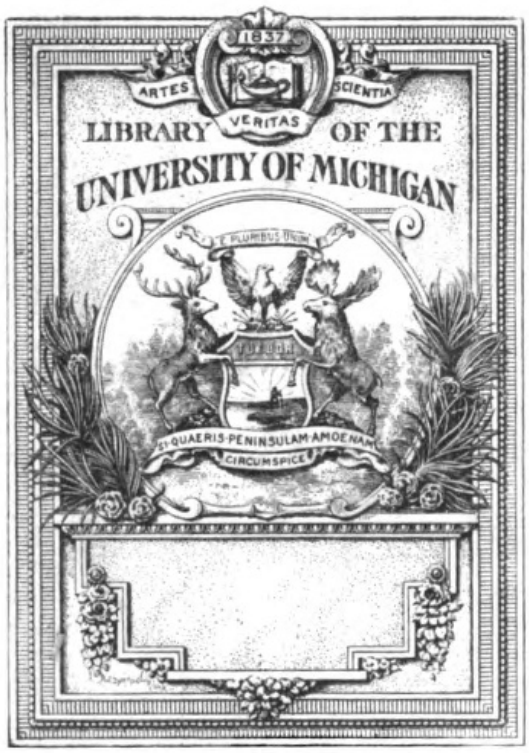
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THE

# STRAND MAGAZINE

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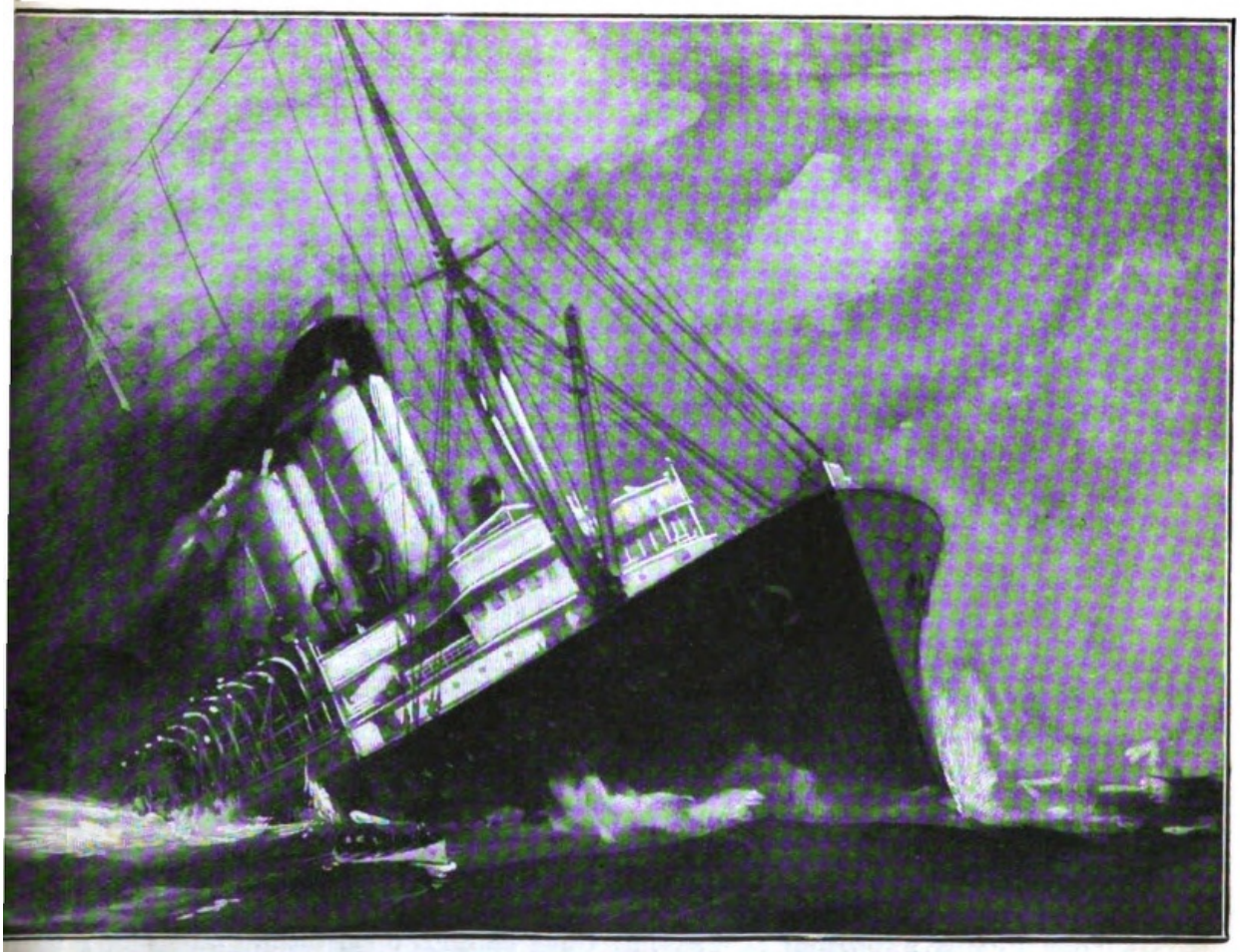
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"THE SHIP LAY WITHIN TWO HUNDRED YARDS OF US, AND IT WAS EASY TO SEE THAT SHE HAD HER DEATH-BLOW."

(*See page 7.*)

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# DANGER!

## Being the Log of Captain John Sirius

By A. CONAN DOYLE

Illustrated by E. S. Hodgson

The Opinions of Naval Experts on this striking story appear on page 20.

IT is an amazing thing that the English, who have the reputation of being a practical nation, never saw the danger to which they were exposed. For many years they had been spending nearly a hundred millions a year upon their army and their fleet. Squadrons of Dreadnoughts costing two millions each had been launched. They had spent enormous sums upon cruisers, and both their torpedo and their submarine squadrons were exceptionally strong. They were also by no means weak in their aerial power, especially in the matter of hydroplanes. Besides all this, their army was very efficient



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in spite of its limited numbers, and it was the most expensive in Europe. Yet when the day of trial came, all this imposing force was of no use whatever, and might as well have not existed. Their ruin could not have been more complete or more rapid if they had not possessed an ironclad or a regiment. And all this was accomplished by me, Captain John Sirius, belonging to the navy of one of the smallest Powers in Europe, and having under my command a flotilla of eight vessels, the collective cost of which was eighteen hundred thousand pounds. No one has a better right to tell the story than I.

I will not trouble you about the dispute concerning the Colonial frontier, embittered, as it was, by the subsequent death of the two missionaries. A naval officer has nothing to do with politics. I only came upon the scene after the ultimatum had been actually received. Admiral Horli had been summoned to the Presence, and he asked that I should be allowed to accompany him, because he happened to know that I had some clear ideas as to the weak points of England and also some schemes as to how to take advantage of them. There were only four of us present at this meeting—the King, the Foreign Secretary, Admiral Horli, and myself. The time allowed by the ultimatum expired in forty-eight hours.

I am not breaking any confidence when I say that both the King and the Minister were in favour of a surrender. They saw no possibility of standing up against the colossal power of Great Britain. The Minister had drawn up an acceptance of the British terms, and the King sat with it before him on the table. I saw the tears of anger and humiliation run down his cheeks as he looked at it.

"I fear that there is no possible alternative, Sire," said the Minister. "Our envoy in London has just sent this report, which shows that the public and the Press are more united than he has ever known them. The feeling is intense, especially since the rash act of Malort in desecrating the flag. We must give way."

The King looked sadly at Admiral Horli.

"What is your effective fleet, Admiral?" he asked.

"Two battleships, four cruisers, twenty torpedo-boats, and eight submarines," said the Admiral.

The King shook his head.

"It would be madness to resist," said he.

"And yet, Sire," said the Admiral, "before you come to a decision I should wish you to hear Captain Sirius, who has a very defir plan of campaign against the English."

"Absurd!" said the King, impatien "What is the use? Do you imagine that could defeat their vast armada?"

"Sire," I answered, "I will stake my that if you will follow my advice you w within a month or six weeks at the utmc bring proud England to her knees."

There was an assurance in my voice whi arrested the attention of the King.

"You seem self-confident, Captain Sirius

"I have no doubt at all, Sire."

"What then would you advise?"

"I would advise, Sire, that the whole fle be gathered under the forts of Blankenbe and be protected from attack by booms ar piles. There they can stay till the war over. The eight submarines, however, yc will leave in my charge to use as I think fit.

"Ah, you would attack the English battl ships with submarines?"

"Sire, I would never go near an Englis battleship."

"And why not?"

"Because they might injure me, Sire."

"What, a sailor and afraid?"

"My life belongs to the country, Sire. I is nothing. But these eight ships—every thing depends upon them. I could not risk them. Nothing would induce me to fight."

"Then what will you do?"

"I will tell you, Sire." And I did so. For half an hour I spoke. I was clear and strong and definite, for many an hour on a lonely watch I had spent in thinking out every detail. I held them enthralled. The King never took his eyes from my face. The Minister sat as if turned to stone.

"Are you sure of all this?"

"Perfectly, Sire."

The King rose from the table.

"Send no answer to the ultimatum," said he. "Announce in both Houses that we stand firm in the face of menace. Admiral Horli, you will in all respects carry out that which Captain Sirius may demand in furtherance of his plan. Captain Sirius, the field is clear. Go forth and do as you have said. A grateful King will know how to reward you."

I need not trouble you by telling you the measures which were taken at Blankenberg, since, as you are aware, the fortress and the entire fleet were destroyed by the British within a week of the declaration of war. I will confine myself to my own plans, which had so glorious and final a result.

The fame of my eight submarines, *Alpha, Beta, Gamma, Theta, Delta, Epsilon, Iota,*

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and *Kappa*, have spread through the world to such an extent that people have begun to think that there was something peculiar in their form and capabilities. This is not so. Four of them, the *Delta*, *Epsilon*, *Iota*, and *Kappa*, were, it is true, of the very latest model, but had their equals (though not their superiors) in the navies of all the great Powers. As to *Alpha*, *Beta*, *Gamma*, and *Theta*, they were by no means modern vessels, and found their prototypes in the old F class of British boats, having a submerged displacement of eight hundred tons, with heavy oil engines of sixteen hundred horse-power, giving them a speed of eighteen knots on the surface and of twelve knots submerged. Their length was one hundred and eighty-six and their breadth twenty-four feet. They had a radius of action of four thousand miles and a submerged endurance of nine hours. These were considered the latest word in 1915, but the four new boats exceeded them in all respects. Without troubling you with precise figures, I may say that they represented roughly a twenty-five per cent. advance upon the older boats, and were fitted with several auxiliary engines which were wanting in the others. At my suggestion, instead of carrying eight of the very large Bakdorf torpedoes, which are nineteen feet long, weigh half a ton, and are charged with two hundred pounds of wet gun-cotton, we had tubes designed for eighteen of less than half the size. It was my design to make myself independent of my base.

And yet it was clear that I must have a base, so I made arrangements at once with that object. Blankenberg was the last place I would have chosen. Why should I have a *port* of any kind? Ports would be watched or occupied. Any place would do for me. I finally chose a small villa standing alone nearly five miles from any village and thirty miles from any port. To this I ordered them to convey, secretly by night, oil, spare parts, extra torpedoes, storage batteries, reserve periscopes, and everything that I could need for refitting. The little white-washed villa of a retired confectioner—that was the base from which I operated against England.

The boats lay at Blankenberg, and thither I went. They were working frantically at the defences, and they had only to look seawards to be spurred to fresh exertions. The British fleet was assembling. The ultimatum had not yet expired, but it was evident that a blow would be struck the instant that it did. Four of their aeroplanes, circling at an immense height, were surveying our defences. From the top of the lighthouse I counted thirty battleships and cruisers in the offing, with a number of the trawlers with which in the British service they break through the mine-fields. The approaches were actually sown with two hundred mines, half contact and half observation, but the result showed that they were insufficient to hold off the enemy, since three days later both town and fleet were speedily destroyed.

However, I am not here to tell you the incidents of the war, but to explain my own part in it, which had such a decisive effect upon the result. My first action was to send my four second-class boats away instantly to the point which I had chosen for my base. There they were to wait submerged, lying with negative buoyancy upon the sands in twenty foot of water, and rising only at night. My strict orders were that they were to attempt nothing upon the enemy, however tempting the opportunity. All they had to do was to remain intact and unseen, until they received further orders. Having made this clear to Commander Panza, who had charge of this reserve flotilla, I shook him by the hand and bade him farewell, leaving with him a sheet of notepaper upon which I had explained the tactics to be used and given him certain general principles which he could apply as circumstances demanded.

My whole attention was now given to my own flotilla, which I divided into two divisions, keeping *Iota* and *Kappa* under my own command, while Captain Miriam had *Delta* and *Epsilon*. He was to operate separately in the British Channel, while my station was the Straits of Dover. I made the whole plan of campaign clear to him. Then I saw that each ship was provided with all it could carry. Each had forty tons of heavy oil for surface propulsion and charging the dynamo which supplied the electric engines under water. Each had also eighteen torpedoes as explained and five hundred rounds for the collapsible quick-firing twelve-pounder which we carried on deck, and which, of course, disappeared into a water-tight tank when we were submerged. We carried spare periscopes and a wireless mast, which could be elevated above the conning-tower when necessary. There were provisions for sixteen days for the ten men who manned each craft. Such was the equipment of the four boats which were destined to bring to naught all the navies and armies of Britain. At sundown that day—it was April 10th—we set forth upon our historic voyage.

Miriam had got away in the afternoon, since he had so much farther to go to reach his

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station. Stephan, of the *Kappa*, started with me; but, of course, we realized that we must work independently, and that from that moment when we shut the sliding hatches of our conning-towers on the still waters of Blankenberg Harbour it was unlikely that we should ever see each other again, though consorts in the same waters. I waved to Stephan from the side of my conning-tower, and he to me. Then I called through the tube to my engineer (our water-tanks were already filled and all kingstons and vents closed) to put her full speed ahead.

Just as we came abreast of the end of the pier and saw the white-capped waves rolling in upon us, I put the horizontal rudder hard down and she slid under water. Through my glass portholes I saw its light green change to a dark blue, while the manometer in front of me indicated twenty feet. I let her go to forty, because I should then be under the warships of the English, though I took the chance of fouling the moorings of our own floating contact mines. Then I brought her on an even keel, and it was music to my ear to hear the gentle, even ticking of my electric engines and to know that I was speeding at twelve miles an hour on my great task.

At that moment, as I stood controlling my levers in my tower, I could have seen, had my cupola been of glass, the vast shadows of the British blockaders hovering above me. I held my course due westward for ninety minutes, and then, by shutting off the electric engine without blowing out the water-tanks, I brought her to the surface. There was a rolling sea and the wind was freshening, so I did not think it safe to keep my hatch open long, for so small is the margin of buoyancy that one must run no risks. But from the crests of the rollers I had a look backwards at Blankenberg, and saw the black funnels and upper works of the enemy's fleet with the lighthouse and the castle behind them, all flushed with the pink glow of the setting sun. Even as I looked there was the boom of a great gun, and then another. I glanced at my watch. It was six o'clock. The time of the ultimatum had expired. We were at war.

There was no craft near us, and our surface speed is nearly twice that of our submerged, so I blew out the tanks and our whale-back came over the surface. All night we were steering south-west, making an average of eighteen knots. At about five in the morning, as I stood alone upon my tiny bridge, I saw, low down in the west, the scattered lights of the Norfolk coast. "Ah, Johnny, Johnny Bull," I said, as I looked at them, "you are going to have your lesson, and I am to be your master. It is I who have been chosen to teach you that one cannot live under artificial conditions and yet act as if they were natural ones. More foresight, Johnny, and less party politics—that is my lesson to you." And then I had a wave of pity, too, when I thought of those vast droves of helpless people, Yorkshire miners, Lancashire spinners, Birmingham metal-workers, the dockers and workers of London, over whose little homes I would bring the shadow of starvation. I seemed to see all those wasted eager hands held out for food, and I, John Sirius, dashing it aside. Ah, well! war is war, and if one is foolish one must pay the price.

Just before daybreak I saw the lights of a considerable town, which must have been Yarmouth, bearing about ten miles west-south-west on our starboard bow. I took her farther out, for it is a sandy, dangerous coast, with many shoals. At five-thirty we were abreast of the Lowestoft lightship. A coastguard was sending up flash signals which faded into a pale twinkle as the white dawn crept over the water. There was a good deal of shipping about, mostly fishing-boats and small coasting craft, with one large steamer hull-down to the west, and a torpedo destroyer between us and the land. It could not harm us, and yet I thought it as well that there should be no word of our presence, so I filled my tanks again and went down to ten feet. I was pleased to find that we got under in one hundred and fifty seconds. The life of one's boat may depend upon this when a swift craft comes suddenly upon you.

We were now within a few hours of our cruising ground, so I determined to snatch a rest, leaving Vornal in charge. When he woke me at ten o'clock we were running on the surface, and had reached the Essex coast off the Maplin Sands. With that charming frankness which is one of their characteristics, our friends of England had informed us by their Press that they had put a cordon of torpedo-boats across the Straits of Dover to prevent the passage of submarines, which is about as sensible as to lay a wooden plank across a stream to keep the eels from passing. I knew that Stephan, whose station lay at the western end of the Solent, would have no difficulty in reaching it. My own cruising ground was to be the mouth of the Thames, and here I was at the very spot with my tiny *Iota*, my eighteen

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torpedoes, my quick-firing gun, and above all, a brain that knew what should be done and how to do it.

When I resumed my place in the conning-tower I saw in the periscope (for we had dived) that a lightship was within a few hundred yards of us upon the port bow. Two men were sitting on her bulwarks, but neither of them cast an eye upon the little rod that clove the water so close to them. It was an ideal day for submarine action, with enough ripple upon the surface to make us difficult to detect, and yet smooth enough to give me a clear view. Each of my three periscopes had an angle of sixty degrees, so that between them I commanded a complete semicircle of the horizon. Two British cruisers were steaming north from the Thames within half a mile of me. I could easily have cut them off and attacked them had I allowed myself to be diverted from my great plan. Farther south a destroyer was passing westwards to Sheerness. A dozen small steamers were moving about. None of these were worthy of my notice. Great countries are not provisioned by small steamers. I kept the engines running at the lowest pace which would hold our position under water, and, moving slowly across the estuary, I waited for what must assuredly come.

I had not long to wait. Shortly after one o'clock I perceived in the periscope a cloud of smoke to the south. Half an hour later a large steamer raised her hull, making for the mouth of the Thames. I ordered Vornal to stand by the starboard torpedo-tube, having the other also loaded in case of a miss. Then I advanced slowly, for though the steamer was going very swiftly we could easily cut her off. Presently I laid the *Iota* in a position near which she must pass, and would very gladly have lain to, but could not for fear of rising to the surface. I therefore steered out in the direction from which she was coming. She was a very large ship, fifteen thousand tons at the least, painted black above and red below, with two cream-coloured funnels. She lay so low in the water that it was clear she had a full cargo. At her bows were a cluster of men, some of them looking, I dare say, for the first time at the mother country. How little could they have guessed the welcome that was awaiting them!

On she came with the great plumes of smoke floating from her funnels, and two white waves foaming from her cut-water. She was within a quarter of a mile. My moment had arrived. I signalled full speed ahead and steered straight for her course. My timing was exact. At a hundred yards I gave the signal, and heard the clank and swish of the discharge. At the same instant I put the helm hard down and flew off at an angle. There was a terrific lurch, which came from the distant explosion. For a moment we were almost upon our side. Then, after staggering and trembling, the *Iota* came on an even keel. I stopped the engines, brought her to the surface, and opened the conning-tower, while all my excited crew came crowding to the hatch to know what had happened.

The ship lay within two hundred yards of us, and it was easy to see that she had her death-blow. She was already settling down by the stern. There was a sound of shouting and people running wildly about her decks. Her name was visible, the *Adela*, of London, bound, as we afterwards learned, from New Zealand with frozen mutton. Strange as it may seem to you, the notion of a submarine had never even now occurred to her people, and all were convinced that they had struck a floating mine. The starboard quarter had been blown in by the explosion, and the ship was sinking rapidly. Their discipline was admirable. We saw boat after boat slip down crowded with people as swiftly and quietly as if it were part of their daily drill. And suddenly, as one of the boats lay off waiting for the others, they caught a glimpse for the first time of my conning-tower so close to them. I saw them shouting and pointing, while the men in the other boats got up to have a better look at us. For my part, I cared nothing, for I took it for granted that they already knew that a submarine had destroyed them. One of them clambered back into the sinking ship. I was sure that he was about to send a wireless message as to our presence. It mattered nothing, since, in any case, it must be known; otherwise I could easily have brought him down with a rifle. As it was, I waved my hand to them, and they waved back to me. War is too big a thing to leave room for personal ill-feeling, but it must be remorseless all the same.

I was still looking at the sinking *Adela* when Vornal, who was beside me, gave a sudden cry of warning and surprise, gripping me by the shoulder and turning my head. There behind us, coming up the fairway, was a huge black vessel with black funnels, flying the well-known house-flag of the P. and O. Company. She was not a mile distant, and I calculated in an instant that even if she had seen us she would not have time to turn and get away before we could reach

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her. We went straight for her, therefore, keeping awash just as we were. They saw the sinking vessel in front of them and that little dark speck moving over the surface, and they suddenly understood their danger. I saw a number of men rush to the bows, and there was a rattle of rifle-fire. Two bullets were flattened upon our four-inch armour. You might as well try to stop a charging bull with paper pellets as the *Iota* with rifle-fire. I had learned my lesson from the *Adela*, and this time I had the torpedo discharged at a safer distance—two hundred and fifty yards. We caught her amidships and the explosion was tremendous, but we were well outside its area. She sank almost instantaneously. I am sorry for her people, of whom I hear that more than two hundred, including seventy Lascars and forty passengers, were drowned. Yes, I am sorry for them. But when I think of the huge floating granary that went to the bottom, I rejoice as a man does who has carried out that which he plans.

It was a bad afternoon that for the P. and O. Company. The second ship which we destroyed was, as we have since learned, the *Moldavia*, of fifteen thousand tons, one of their finest vessels; but about half-past three we blew up the *Cusco*, of eight thousand, of the same line, also from Eastern ports, and laden with corn. Why she came on in face of the wireless messages which must have warned her of danger, I cannot imagine. The other two steamers which we blew up that day, the *Maid of Athens* (Robson Line) and the *Cormorant*, were neither of them provided with apparatus, and came blindly to their destruction. Both were small boats of from five thousand to seven thousand tons. In the case of the second, I had to rise to the surface and fire six twelve-pound shells under her water-line before she would sink. In each case the crew took to the boats, and so far as I know no casualties occurred.

After that no more steamers came along, nor did I expect them. Warnings must by this time have been flying in all directions. But we had no reason to be dissatisfied with our first day. Between the Maplin Sands and the Nore we had sunk five ships of a total tonnage of about fifty thousand tons. Already the London markets would begin to feel the pinch. And Lloyd's—poor old Lloyd's—what a demented state it would be in! I could imagine the London evening papers and the howling in Fleet Street. We saw the result of our actions, for it was quite laughable to see the torpedo-boats buzzing like angry wasps out of Sheerness in the evening. They were darting in every direction across the estuary, and the aeroplanes and hydroplanes were like flights of crows, black dots against the red western sky. They quartered the whole river mouth, until they discovered us at last. Some sharp-sighted fellow with a telescope on board of a destroyer got a sight of our periscope, and came for us full speed. No doubt he would very gladly have rammed us, even if it had meant his own destruction, but that was not part of our programme at all. I sank her and ran her east-south-east with an occasional rise. Finally we brought her to, not very far from the Kentish coast, and the search-lights of our pursuers were far on the western skyline. There we lay quietly all night, for a submarine at night is nothing more than a very third-rate surface torpedo-boat. Besides, we were all weary and needed rest. Do not forget, you captains of men, when you grease and trim your pumps and compressors and rotators, that the human machine needs some tending also.

I had put up the wireless mast above the conning-tower, and had no difficulty in calling up Captain Stephan. He was lying, he said, off Ventnor and had been unable to reach his station, on account of engine trouble, which he had now set right. Next morning he proposed to block the Southampton approach. He had destroyed one large Indian boat on his way down Channel. We exchanged good wishes. Like myself, he needed rest. I was up at four in the morning, however, and called all hands to overhaul the boat. She was somewhat up by the head, owing to the forward torpedoes having been used, so we trimmed her by opening the forward compensating tank, admitting as much water as the torpedoes had weighed. We also overhauled the starboard air-compressor and one of the periscope motors which had been jarred by the shock of the first explosion. We had hardly got ourselves shipshape when the morning dawned.

I have no doubt that a good many ships which had taken refuge in the French ports at the first alarm had run across and got safely up the river in the night. Of course I could have attacked them, but I do not care to take risks—and there are always risks for a submarine at night. But one had miscalculated his time, and there she was, just abreast of Warden Point, when the daylight disclosed her to us. In an instant we were after her. It was a near thing, for she was a flier, and could do two miles to our one; but we just reached her as she went swashing

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"WE LOOKED UP, AND YOU C
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by. She saw us at the last moment, for I attacked her awash, since otherwise we could not have had the pace to reach her. She swung away and the first torpedo missed, but the second took her full under the counter. Heavens, what a smash! The whole stern seemed to go aloft. I drew off and watched her sink. She went down in seven minutes, leaving her masts and funnels over the water and a cluster of her people holding on to them. She was the *Virginia*, of the Bibby Line —twelve thousand tons—and laden, like the others, with foodstuffs from the East. The whole surface of the sea was covered with the floating grain. "John Bull will have to take up a hole or two of his belt if this goes on," said Vornal, as we watched the scene.

And it was at that moment that the very worst danger occurred that could befall us. I tremble now when I think how our glorious voyage might have been nipped in the bud. I had freed the hatch of my tower, and was looking at the boats of the *Virginia* with Vornal beside me, when there was a swish and a terrific splash in the water beside us, which covered us both with spray. We looked up, and you can imagine our feelings when we saw an aeroplane hovering a few hundred feet above us like a hawk. With its silencer, it was perfectly noiseless, and had its bomb not fallen into the sea we should never have known what had destroyed us. She was circling round in the hope of dropping a second one, but we shoved on all speed ahead, crammed down the rudders, and vanished into the side of a roller. I kept the deflection indicator falling until I had put fifty good feet of water between the aeroplane and ourselves, for I knew well how deeply they can see under the surface. However, we soon threw her off our track, and when we came to the surface near Margate there was no sign of her, unless she was one of several which we saw hovering over Herne Bay.

There was not a ship in the offing save a few small coasters and little thousand-ton steamers, which were beneath my notice. For several hours I lay submerged with a blank periscope. Then I had an inspiration. Orders had been marconied to every foodship to lie in French waters and dash across after dark. I was as sure of it as if they had been recorded in our own receiver. Well, if they were there, that was where I should be also. I blew out the tanks and rose, for there was no sign of any warship near. They had some good system of signalling from the shore, however, for I had not got to the North Foreland before three destroyers came foaming after me, all converging from different directions. They had about as good a chance of catching me as three spaniels would have of overtaking a porpoise. Out of pure bravado—I know it was very wrong—I waited until they were actually within gunshot. Then I sank and we saw each other no more.

It is, as I have said, a shallow sandy coast, and submarine navigation is very difficult. The worst mishap that can befall a boat is to bury its nose in the side of a sand-drift and be held there. Such an accident might have been the end of our boat, though with our Fleuss cylinders and electric lamps we should have found no difficulty in getting out at the air-lock and in walking ashore across the bed of the ocean. As it was, however, I was able, thanks to our excellent charts, to keep the channel and so to gain the open straits. There we rose about midday, but, observing a hydroplane at no great distance, we sank again for half an hour. When we came up for the second time, all was peaceful around us, and the English coast was lining the whole western horizon. We kept outside the Goodwins and straight down Channel until we saw a line of black dots in front of us, which I knew to be the Dover-Calais torpedo-boat



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"'IT'S AN AMERICAN SHIP, YOU BLIND BEETLE!' HE CRIED. 'CAN'T YOU SEE THE FLAG? IT'S THE "VERMONDIA," OF BOSTON.'"

cordon. When two miles distant we dived and came up again seven miles to the south-west, without one of them dreaming that we had been within thirty feet of their keels.

When we rose, a large steamer flying the German flag was within half a mile of us. It was the North German Lloyd *Altona*, from New York to Bremen. I raised our whole hull and dipped our flag to her. It was amusing to see the amazement of her people at what they must have regarded as our unparalleled impudence in those English-swept waters. They cheered us heartily, and the tricolour flag was dipped in greeting as they went roaring past us. Then I stood in to the French coast.

It was exactly as I had expected. There were three great British steamers lying at anchor in Boulogne outer harbour. They were the *Cæsar*, the *King of the East*, and the *Pathfinder*, none less than ten thousand tons. I suppose they thought they were safe in French waters, but what did I care about three-mile limits and international law! The view of my Government was that England was blockaded, food contraband, and vessels carrying it to be destroyed. The lawyers could argue about it afterwards. My business was to starve the enemy any way I could. Within an hour the three ships were under the waves and the *Iota* was steaming down the Picardy coast, looking for fresh victims. The Channel was covered with English torpedo-boats buzzing and whirling like a cloud of midges. How they thought they could hurt me I cannot imagine, unless by accident I were to come up underneath one of them. More dangerous were the aeroplanes which circled here and there.

The water being calm, I had several times to descend as deep as a hundred feet before I was sure that I was out of their sight. After I had blown up the three ships at Boulogne I saw two aeroplanes flying down Channel, and I knew that they would head off any vessels which were coming up. There was one very large white steamer lying off Havre, but she steamed west before I could reach her. I dare say Stephan or one of the others would get her before long. But those infernal aeroplanes spoiled our sport for that day. Not another steamer did I see, save the never-ending torpedo-boats. I consoled myself with the reflection, however, that no food was passing me on its way to London. That was what I was there for, after all. If I could do it without spending my torpedoes, all the better. Up to date I had fired ten of them and sunk nine steamers, so I had not wasted my weapons. That night I came back to the Kent coast and lay upon the bottom in shallow water near Dungeness.

We were all trimmed and ready at the first break of day, for I expected to catch some ships which had tried to make the Thames in the darkness and had miscalculated their time. Sure enough, there was a great steamer coming up Channel and flying the American flag. It was all the same to me what flag she flew so long as she was engaged in conveying contraband of war to the British Isles. There were no torpedo-boats about at the moment, so I ran out on the surface and fired a shot across her bows. She seemed inclined to go on, so I put a second one just above her water-line on her port bow. She stopped then and a very angry man began to gesticulate from the bridge. I ran the *Iota* almost alongside.

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"Are you the captain?" I asked.

"What the ——" I won't attempt to reproduce his language.

"You have food-stuffs on board?" I said.

"It's an American ship, you blind beetle!" he cried. "Can't you see the flag? It's the *Vermondia*, of Boston."

"Sorry, Captain," I answered. "I have really no time for words. Those shots of mine will bring the torpedo-boats, and I dare say at this very moment your wireless is making trouble for me. Get your people into the boats."

I had to show him I was not bluffing, so I drew off and began putting shells into him just on the water-line. When I had knocked six holes in it he was very busy on his boats. I fired twenty shots altogether, and no torpedo was needed, for she was lying over with a terrible list to port, and presently came right on to her side. There she lay for two or three minutes before she foundered. There were eight boats crammed with people lying round her when she went down. I believe everybody was saved, but I could not wait to inquire. From all quarters the poor old panting, useless war-vessels were hurrying. I filled my tanks, ran her bows under, and came up fifteen miles to the south. Of course, I knew there would be a big row afterwards—as there was—but that did not help the starving crowds round the London bakers, who only saved their skins, poor devils, by explaining to the mob that they had nothing to bake.

By this time I was becoming rather anxious, as you can imagine to know what was going on in the world and what England was thinking about it all. I ran alongside a fishing-boat, therefore, and ordered them to give up their papers. Unfortunately, they had none, except a rag of an evening paper, which was full of nothing but betting news. In a second attempt I came alongside a small yachting party from Eastbourne, who were frightened to death at our sudden appearance out of the depths. From them we were lucky enough to get the London *Courier* of that very morning.

It was interesting reading—so interesting that I had to announce it all to the crew. Of course, you know the British style of headline, which gives you all the news at a glance. It seemed to me that the whole paper was headlines, it was in such a state of excitement. Hardly a word about me and my flotilla. We were on the second page. The first one began something like this:—

CAPTURE OF BLANKENBERG!

DESTRUCTION OF ENEMY'S FLEET.

BURNING OF TOWN.

TRAWLERS DESTROY MINE FIELD.
LOSS OF TWO BATTLESHIPS.

IS IT THE END?

Of course, what I had foreseen had occurred. The town was actually occupied by the British. And they thought it was the end! We would see about that.

On the round-the-corner page, at the back of the glorious resonant leaders, there was a little column which read like this:—

"HOSTILE SUBMARINES.

"Several of the enemy's submarines are at sea, and have inflicted some appreciable damage upon our merchant ships. The danger-spots upon Monday and the greater part of Tuesday appear to have been the mouth of the Thames and the western entrance to the Solent. On Monday, between the Nore and Margate, there were sunk five large steamers, the *Adela*, *Moldavia*, *Cusco*, *Cormorant*, and *Maid of Athens*, particulars of which will be found below. Near Ventnor on the same day was sunk the *Verulam*, from Bombay. On Tuesday the *Virginia*, *Cæsar*, *King of the East*, and *Pathfinder* were destroyed between the Foreland and Boulogne. The latter three were actually lying in French waters, and the most energetic representations have been made by the Government of the Republic. On the same day *The Queen of Sheba*, *Orontes*, *Diana*, and *Atalanta* were destroyed near the Needles. Wireless messages have stopped all ingoing cargo-ships from coming up Channel, but unfortunately there is evidence that at least two of the enemy's submarines are in the West. Four cattle-ships from Dublin to Liverpool were sunk yesterday evening, while three Bristol-bound steamers, *The Hilda*, *Mercury*, and *Maria Toser*, were blown up in the neighbourhood of Lundy Island. Commerce has, so far as possible, been diverted into safer channels, but in the meantime, however vexatious these incidents may be, and however grievous the loss both to the owners and to Lloyd's, we may console ourselves by the reflection that since a submarine cannot keep the sea for more than ten days without refitting, and since the base has been captured, there must come a speedy term to these depredations."

So much for the *Courier's* account of our proceedings. Another small paragraph was, however, more eloquent:—

"The price of wheat," it said, "which stood at thirty-five shillings a week before the declaration of war, was quoted yesterday on the Baltic at fifty-two. Maize has gone from twenty-one to thirty-seven, barley from nineteen to thirty-five, sugar (foreign granulated) from eleven shillings and threepence to nineteen shillings and sixpence."

"Good, my lads!" said I, when I read it to the crew. "I can assure you that those few lines will prove to mean more than the whole page about the Fall of Blankenberg. Now

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let us get down Channel and send those prices up a little higher."

All traffic had stopped for London—not so bad for the little *Iota*—and we did not see a steamer that was worth a torpedo between Dungeness and the Isle of Wight. There I called Stephan up by wireless, and by seven o'clock we were actually lying side by side in a smooth rolling sea—Hengistbury Head bearing N.N.W. and about five miles distant. The two crews clustered on the whale-backs and shouted their joy at seeing friendly faces once more. Stephan had done extraordinarily well. I had, of course, read in the London paper of his four ships on Tuesday, but he had sunk no fewer than seven since, for many of those which should have come to the Thames had tried to make Southampton. Of the seven, one was of twenty thousand tons, a grain-ship from America, a second was a grain-ship from the Black Sea, and two others were great liners from South Africa. I congratulated Stephan with all my heart upon his splendid achievement. Then, as we had been seen by a destroyer which was approaching at a great pace, we both dived, coming up again off the Needles, where we spent the night in company. We could not visit each other, since we had no boat, but we lay so nearly alongside that we were able, Stephan and I, to talk from hatch to hatch and so make our plans.

He had shot away more than half his torpedoes and so had I, and yet we were very averse from returning to our base so long as our oil held out. I told him of my experience with the Boston steamer, and we mutually agreed to sink the ships by gun-fire in future so far as possible. I remember old Horli saying, "What use is a gun aboard a submarine?" We were about to show. I read the English paper to Stephan by the light of my electric torch, and we both agreed that few ships would now come up the Channel. That sentence about diverting commerce to safer routes could only mean that the ships would go round the North of Ireland and unload at Glasgow. Oh, for two more ships to stop that entrance! Heavens, what *would* England have done against a foe with thirty or forty submarines, since we only needed six instead of four to complete her destruction! After much talk we decided that the best plan would be that I should dispatch a cipher telegram next morning from a French port to tell them to send the four second-rate boats to cruise off the North of Ireland and West of Scotland. Then when I had done this I should move down Channel with Stephan and operate at the mouth, while the other two boats could work in the Irish Sea. Having made these plans, I set off across the Channel in the early morning, reaching the small village of Etretat, in Brittany. There I got off my telegram and then laid my course for Falmouth, passing under the keels of two British cruisers which were making eagerly for Etretat, having heard by wireless that we were there.

Half-way down Channel we had trouble with a short circuit in our electric engines, and were compelled to run on the surface for several hours while we replaced one of the cam-shafts and renewed some washers. It was a ticklish time, for had a torpedo-boat come upon us we could not have dived. The perfect submarine of the future will surely have some alternative engines for such an emergency. However, by the skill of Engineer Morro we got things going once more. All the time we lay there I saw a hydroplane floating between us and the British coast. I can understand how a mouse feels when it is in a tuft of grass and sees a hawk high up in the heavens. However, all went well; the mouse became a water-rat, it wagged its tail in derision at the poor blind old hawk, and it dived down into a nice safe green, quiet world where there was nothing to injure it.

It was on the Wednesday night that the *Iota* crossed to Etretat. It was Friday afternoon before we had reached our new cruising ground. Only one large steamer did I see upon our way. The terror we had caused had cleared the Channel. This big boat had a clever captain on board. His tactics were excellent and took him in safety to the Thames. He came zigzagging up Channel at twenty-five knots, shooting off from his course at all sorts of unexpected angles. With our slow pace we could not catch him, nor could we calculate his line so as to cut him off. Of course, he had never seen us, but he judged, and judged rightly, that wherever we were those were the tactics by which he had the best chance of getting past. He deserved his success.

But, of course, it is only in a wide Channel that such things can be done. Had I met him in the mouth of the Thames there would have been a different story to tell. As I approached Falmouth I destroyed a three-thousand-ton boat from Cork, laden with butter and cheese. It was my only success for three days.

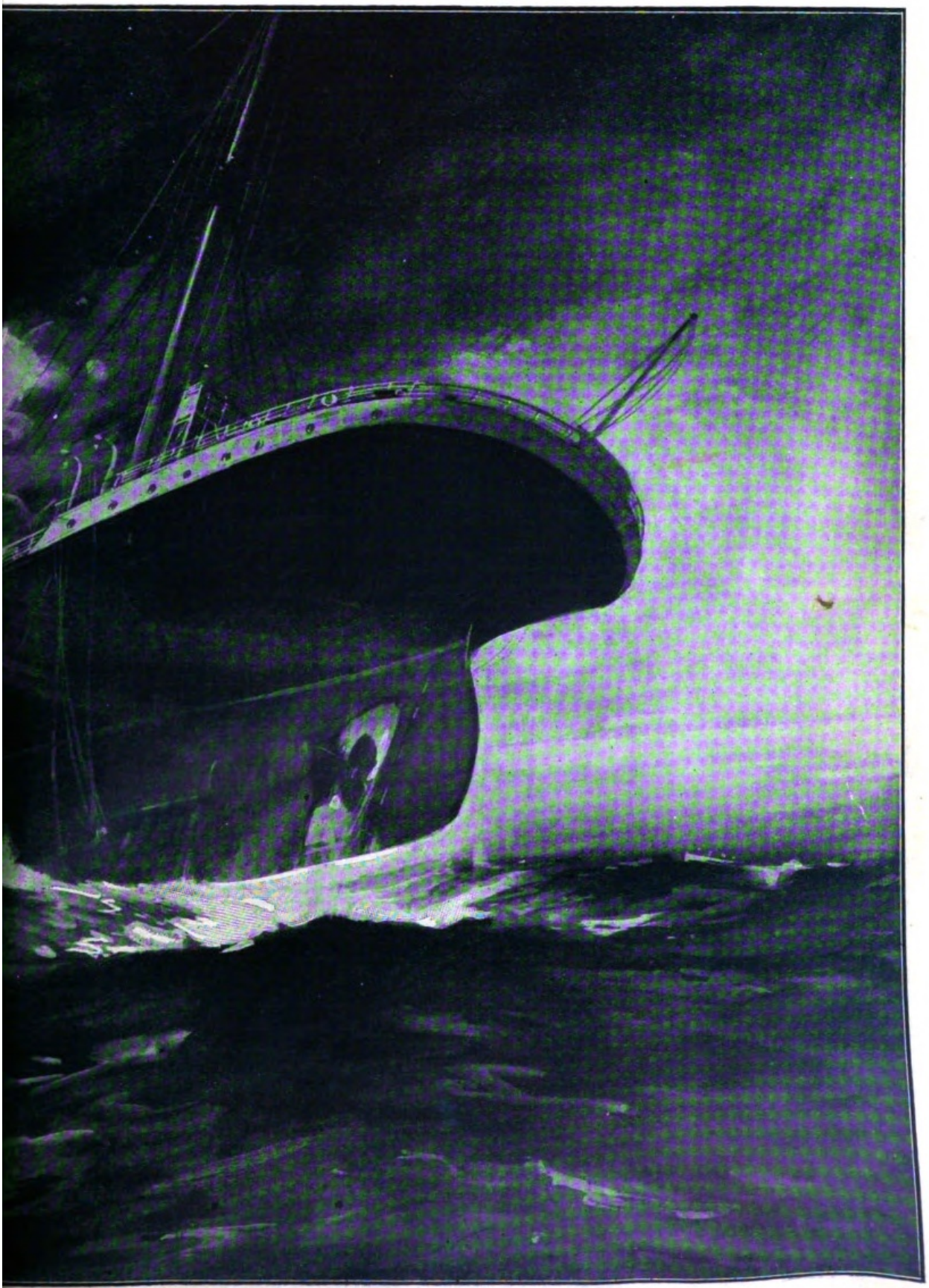
That night (Friday, April 16th) I called up Stephan, but received no reply. As I was within a few miles of our rendezvous, and as

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"SHE DIVED BOWS FOREMOST, AND THERE WAS A TERRIFIC

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EXPLOSION, WHICH SENT ONE OF THE FUNNELS INTO THE AIR."

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he would not be cruising after dark, I was puzzled to account for his silence. I could only imagine that his wireless was deranged. But, alas! I was soon to find the true reason from a copy of the *Western Morning News*, which I obtained from a Brixham trawler. The *Kappa*, with her gallant commander and crew, were at the bottom of the English Channel.

It appeared from this account that after I had parted from him he had met and sunk no fewer than five vessels. I gathered these to be his work, since all of them were by gun fire, and all were on the south coast of Dorset or Devon. How he met his fate was stated in a short telegram which was headed "Sinking of a Hostile Submarine." It was marked "Falmouth," and ran thus:—

"The P. and O. mail steamer *Macedonia* came into this port last night with five shell holes between wind and water. She reports having been attacked by a hostile submarine ten miles to the south-east of the Lizard. Instead of using her torpedoes, the submarine for some reason approached upon the surface and fired five shots from a semi-automatic twelve-pounder gun. She was evidently under the impression that the *Macedonia* was unarmed. As a matter of fact, being warned of the presence of submarines in the Channel, the *Macedonia* had mounted her armament as an auxiliary cruiser. She opened fire with two quick-firers and blew away the conning-tower of the submarine. It is probable that the shells went right through her, as she sank at once with her hatches open. The *Macedonia* was only kept afloat by her pumps."

Such was the end of the *Kappa*, and my gallant friend Commander Stephan. His best epitaph was in a corner of the same paper, and was headed "Mark Lane." It ran:—

"Wheat (average) 66, maize 48, barley 50."

Well, if Stephan was gone there was the more need for me to show energy. My plans were quickly taken, but they were comprehensive. All that day (Saturday) I passed down the Cornish coast and round Land's End, getting two steamers on the way. I had learned from Stephan's fate that it was better to torpedo the large craft, but I was aware that the auxiliary cruisers of the British Government were all over ten thousand tons, so that for all ships under that size it was safe to use my gun. Both these craft, the *Yelland* and the *Playboy*—the latter an American ship—were perfectly harmless, so I came up within a hundred yards of them and speedily sank them, after allowing their people to get into boats. Some other steamers lay farther out, but I was so eager to make my new arrangements that I did not go out of my course to molest them. Just before sunset, however, so magnificent a prey came within my radius of action that I could not possibly refuse her. No sailor could fail to recognize that glorious monarch of the sea, with her four cream funnels tipped with black, her huge black sides, her red bilges, and her high white top-hamper, roaring up Channel at twenty-three knots, and carrying her forty-five thousand tons as lightly as if she were a five-ton motor-boat. It was the queenly *Olympic*, of the White Star—once the largest and still the comeliest of liners. What a picture she made, with the blue Cornish sea creaming round her giant fore-foot, and the pink western sky with one evening star forming the background to her noble lines.

She was about five miles off when we dived to cut her off. My calculation was exact. As we came abreast we loosed our torpedo and struck her fair. We swirled round with the concussion of the water. I saw her in my periscope list over on her side, and I knew that she had her death-blow. She settled down slowly, and there was plenty of time to save her people. The sea was dotted with her boats. When I got about three miles off I rose to the surface, and the whole crew clustered up to see the wonderful sight. She dived bows foremost, and there was a terrific explosion, which sent one of the funnels into the air. I suppose we should have cheered—somehow, none of us felt like cheering. We were all keen sailors, and it went to our hearts to see such a ship go down like a broken egg-shell. I gave a gruff order, and all were at their posts again while we headed north-west. Once round the Land's End I called up my two consorts, and we met next day at Hartland Point, the south end of Bideford Bay. For the moment the Channel was clear, but the English could not know it, and I reckoned that the loss of the *Olympic* would stop all ships for a day or two at least.

Having assembled the *Delta* and *Epsilon*, one on each side of me, I received the report from Miriam and Var, the respective commanders. Each had expended twelve torpedoes, and between them they had sunk twenty-two steamers. One man had been killed by the machinery on board of the *Delta*, and two had been burned by the ignition of some oil on the *Epsilon*. I took these injured men on board, and I gave each of the boats one of my crew. I also divided my spare oil, my provisions, and my torpedoes among them, though we had the greatest possible difficulty in those crank vessels in transferring them from one to the other. However, by ten o'clock it was done, and the two vessels were in condition to keep the sea for another ten days. For my part,

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with only two torpedoes left, I headed north up the Irish Sea. One of my torpedoes I expended that evening upon a cattle-ship making for Milford Haven. Late at night, being abreast of Holyhead, I called upon my four Northern boats, but without reply. Their Marconi range is very limited. About three in the afternoon of the next day I had a feeble answer. It was a great relief to me to find that my telegraphic instructions had reached them and that they were on their station. Before evening we all assembled in the lee of Sanda Island, in the Mull of Kintyre. I felt an admiral indeed when I saw my five whalebacks all in a row. Panza's report was excellent. They had come round by the Pentland Firth and reached their cruising ground on the fourth day. Already they had destroyed twenty vessels without any mishap. I ordered the *Beta* to divide her oil and torpedoes among the other three, so that they were in good condition to continue their cruise. Then the *Beta* and I headed for home, reaching our base upon Sunday, April 25th. Off Cape Wrath I picked up a paper from a small schooner.

"Wheat, 84; Maize, 60; Barley, 62." What were battles and bombardments compared to that!

The whole coast of Norland was closely blockaded by cordon within cordon, and every port, even the smallest, held by the British. But why should they suspect my modest confectioner's villa more than any other of the ten thousand houses that face the sea? I was glad when I picked up its homely white front in my periscope. That night I landed and found my stores intact. Before morning the *Beta* reported itself, for we had the windows lit as a guide.

It is not for me to recount the messages which I found waiting for me at my humble headquarters. They shall ever remain as the patents of nobility of my family. Among others was that never-to-be-forgotten salutation from my King. He desired me to present myself at Hauptville, but for once I took it upon myself to disobey his commands. It took me two days—or rather two nights, for we sank ourselves during the daylight hours—to get all our stores on board, but my presence was needful every minute of the time. On the third morning, at four o'clock, the *Beta* and my own little flagship were at sea once more, bound for our original station off the mouth of the Thames.

I had no time to read our papers whilst I was refitting, but I gathered the news after we got under way. The British occupied all our ports, but otherwise we had not suffered at all, since we have excellent railway communications with Europe. Prices had altered little, and our industries continued as before. There was talk of a British invasion, but this I knew to be absolute nonsense, for the British must have learned by this time that it would be sheer murder to send transports full of soldiers to sea in the face of submarines. When they have a tunnel they can use their fine expeditionary force upon the Continent, but until then it might just as well not exist so far as Europe is concerned. My own country, therefore, was in good case and had nothing to fear. Great Britain, however, was already feeling my grip upon her throat. As in normal times four-fifths of her food is imported, prices were rising by leaps and bounds. The supplies in the country were beginning to show signs of depletion, while little was coming in to replace it. The insurances at Lloyd's had risen to a figure which made the price of the food prohibitive to the mass of the people by the time it had reached the market. The loaf, which under ordinary circumstances stood at fivepence, was already at one and twopence. Beef was three shillings and fourpence a pound, and mutton two shillings and ninepence. Everything else was in proportion. The Government had acted with energy and offered a big bounty for corn to be planted at once. It could only be reaped five months hence, however, and long before then, as the papers pointed out, half the island would be dead from starvation. Strong appeals had been made to the patriotism of the people, and they were assured that the interference with trade was temporary, and that with a little patience all would be well. But already there was a marked rise in the death-rate, especially among children, who suffered from want of milk, the cattle being slaughtered for food. There was serious rioting in the Lanarkshire coalfields and in the Midlands, together with a Socialistic upheaval in the East of London, which had assumed the proportions of a civil war. Already there were responsible papers which declared that England was in an impossible position, and that an immediate peace was necessary to prevent one of the greatest tragedies in history. It was my task now to prove to them that they were right.

It was May 2nd when I found myself back at the Maplin Sands to the north of the estuary of the Thames. The *Beta* was sent on to the Solent to block it and take the place



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of the lamented *Kappa*. And now I was throttling Britain indeed—London, Southampton, the Bristol Channel, Liverpool, the North Channel, the Glasgow approaches, each was guarded by my boats. Great liners were, as we learned afterwards, pouring their supplies into Galway and the West of Ireland, where provisions were cheaper than has ever been known. Tens of thousands were embarking from Britain for Ireland in order to save themselves from starvation. But you cannot transplant a whole dense population. The main body of the people, by the middle of May, were actually starving. At that date wheat was at a hundred, maize and barley at eighty. Even the most obstinate had begun to see that the situation could not possibly continue.

In the great towns starving crowds clamoured for bread before the municipal offices, and public officials everywhere were attacked and often murdered by frantic mobs, composed largely of desperate women who had seen their infants perish before their eyes. In the country, roots, bark, and weeds of every sort were used as food. In London the private mansions of Ministers were guarded by strong pickets of soldiers, while a battalion of Guards was camped permanently round the Houses of Parliament. The lives of the Prime Minister and of the Foreign Secretary were continually threatened and occasionally attempted. Yet the Government had entered upon the war with the full assent of every party in the State. The true culprits were those, be they politicians or journalists, who had not the foresight to understand that unless Britain grew her own supplies, or unless by means of a tunnel she had some way of conveying them into the island, all her mighty expenditure upon her army and her fleet was a mere waste of money so long as her antagonist had a few submarines and men who could use them. England has often been stupid, but has got off scot-free. This time she was stupid and had to pay the price. You can't expect Luck to be your saviour always.

It would be a mere repetition of what I have already described if I were to recount all our proceedings during that first ten days after I resumed my station. During my absence the ships had taken heart and had begun to come up again. In the first day I got four. After that I had to go farther afield, and again I picked up several in French waters. Once I had a narrow escape through one of my kingston valves getting some grit into it and refusing to act when I was below the surface. Our margin of buoyancy just carried us through. By the end of that week the Channel was clear again and both *Beta* and my own boat were down West once more. There we had encouraging messages from our Bristol consort, who in turn had heard from *Delta* at Liverpool. Our task was completely done. We could not prevent all food from passing into the British Islands, but at least we had raised what did get in to a price which put it far beyond the means of the penniless, workless multitudes. In vain Government commandeered it all and doled it out as a general feeds the garrison of a fortress. The task was too great—the responsibility too horrible. Even the proud and stubborn English could not face it any longer.

I remember well how the news came to me. I was lying at the time off Selsey Bill when I saw a small war-vessel coming down Channel. It had never been my policy to attack any vessel coming *down*. My torpedoes and even my shells were too precious for that. I could not help being attracted, however, by the movements of this ship, which came slowly zigzagging in my direction.

"Looking for me," thought I. "What on earth does the foolish thing hope to do if she could find me?"

I was lying awash at the time and got ready to go below in case she should come for me. But at that moment—she was about half a mile away—she turned her quarter, and there to my amazement was the red flag with the blue circle, our own beloved flag, flying from her peak. For a moment I thought that this was some clever dodge of the enemy to tempt me within range. I snatched up my glasses and called on Vornal. Then we both recognized the vessel. It was the *Juno*, the only one left intact of our own cruisers. What could she be doing flying the flag in the enemy's waters? Then I understood it, and turning to Vornal, we threw ourselves into each other's arms. It could only mean an armistice—or peace!

And it was peace. We learned the glad news when we had risen alongside the *Juno*, and the ringing cheers which greeted us had at last died away. Our orders were to report ourselves at once at Blankenberg. Then she passed on down Channel to collect the others. We returned to port upon the surface, steaming through the whole British fleet as we passed up the North Sea. The crews clustered thick along the sides of the vessels to watch us. I can see now their sullen, angry faces. Many shook their fists and cursed us as we went by. It was not that we had damaged them—I will do them the justice

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to say that the English, as the old Boer War has proved, bear no resentment against a brave enemy—but that they thought us cowardly to attack merchant ships and avoid the warships. It is like the Arabs who think that a flank attack is a mean, unmanly device. War is not a big game, my English friends. It is a desperate business to gain the upper hand, and one must use one's brain in order to find the weak spot of one's enemy. It is not fair to blame me if I have found yours. It was my duty. Perhaps those officers and sailors who scowled at the little *Iota* that May morning have by this time done me justice when the first bitterness of undeserved defeat was past.

Let others describe my entrance into Blankenberg; the mad enthusiasm of the crowds, and the magnificent public reception of each successive boat as it arrived. Surely the men deserved the grant made them by the State which has enabled each of them to be independent for life. As a feat of endurance, that long residence in such a state of mental tension in cramped quarters, breathing an unnatural atmosphere, will long remain as a record. The country may well be proud of such sailors.

The terms of peace were not made onerous, for we were in no condition to make Great Britain our permanent enemy. We knew well that we had won the war by circumstances which would never be allowed to occur again, and that in a few years the Island Power would be as strong as ever—stronger, perhaps—for the lesson that she had learned. It would be madness to provoke such an antagonist. A mutual salute of flags was arranged, the Colonial boundary was adjusted by arbitration, and we claimed no indemnity beyond an undertaking on the part of Britain that she would pay any damages which an International Court might award to France or to the United States for injury received through the operations of our submarines. So ended the war!

Of course, England will not be caught napping in such a fashion again! Her foolish blindness is partly explained by her delusion that her enemy would not torpedo merchant vessels. Common sense should have told her that her enemy will play the game that suits them best—that they will not inquire what they may do, but they will do it first and talk about it afterwards. The opinion of the whole world now is that if a blockade were proclaimed one may do what one can with those who try to break it, and that it was as reasonable to prevent food from reaching England in war time as it is for a besieger to prevent the victualling of a beleaguered fortress.

I cannot end this account better than by quoting the first few paragraphs of a leader in the *Times*, which appeared shortly after the declaration of peace. It may be taken to epitomize the saner public opinion of England upon the meaning and lessons of the episode.

"In all this miserable business," said the writer, "which has cost us the loss of a considerable portion of our merchant fleet, and more than fifty thousand civilian lives, there is just one consolation to be found. It lies in the fact that our temporary conqueror is a Power which is not strong enough to reap the fruits of her victory. Had we endured this humiliation at the hands of any of the first-class Powers it would certainly have entailed the loss of all our Crown Colonies and tropical possessions, besides the payment of a huge indemnity. We were absolutely at the feet of our conqueror, and had no possible alternative but to submit to her terms, however onerous. Norland has had the good sense to understand that she must not abuse her temporary advantage, and has been generous in her dealings. In the grip of any other Power we should have ceased to exist as an Empire.

"Even now we are not out of the wood. Someone may maliciously pick a quarrel with us before we get our house in order, and use the easy weapon which has been demonstrated. It is to meet such a contingency that the Government has rushed enormous stores of food at the public expense into the country. In a very few months the new harvest will have appeared. On the whole we can face the immediate future without undue depression, though there remain some causes for anxiety. These will no doubt be energetically handled by this new and efficient Government, which has taken the place of those discredited politicians who led us into a war without having foreseen how helpless we were against an obvious form of attack.

"Already the lines of our reconstruction are evident. The first and most important is that our Party men realize that there is something more vital than their academic disputes about Free Trade or Protection, and that all theory must give way to the fact that a country is in an artificial and dangerous condition if she does not produce within her own borders sufficient food to at least keep life in her population. Whether this should be brought about by a tax upon foreign foodstuffs, or by a bounty upon home products, or by a combination of the two, is now under discussion. But all Parties are combined upon the principle, and, though it will undoubtedly entail either a rise in prices or a deterioration in quality in the food of the working-classes, they will at least be insured against so terrible a visitation as that which is fresh in our memories. At any rate, we have got past the stage of argument. It *must* be so. The increased prosperity of the farming interest, and, as we will hope, the cessation of agricultural emigration, will be benefits to be counted against the obvious disadvantages.

"The second lesson is the immediate construction of not one but two double-lined railways under the Channel. We stand in a white sheet over the matter, since the project has always been discouraged in these columns, but we are prepared to admit that had such railway communication been combined with adequate arrangements for forwarding supplies from Marseilles, we should have avoided our recent

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surrender. We still insist that we cannot trust entirely to a tunnel, since our enemy might have allies in the Mediterranean; but in a single contest with any Power of the North of Europe it would certainly be of inestimable benefit. There may be dangers attendant upon the existence of a tunnel, but it must now be admitted that they are trivial compared to those which come from its absence. As to the building of large fleets of merchant submarines for the carriage of food, that is a new departure which will be an additional insurance against the danger which has left so dark a page in the history of our country."

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# WHAT NAVAL EXPERTS THINK.

***Proofs of this striking piece of fiction were submitted to a number of naval experts, who were invited to state their views on the points raised in the story. As a result we are able to give the opinions of several well-known admirals, as well as a number of writers recognized as authorities on naval subjects, with notes by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.***

## ADMIRAL LORD CHARLES BERESFORD.

WE have done something to meet the dangers to our food supplies by arming some of our merchantmen, but we shall never be really secure until we have installed granaries in the country.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's story will bring this important question well to the front.

## Mr. FRANK T. BULLEN, the well-known writer of sea stories.

You ask me if this could come true. I should say certainly yes—not only could it, but it is eminently probable.

## ADMIRAL SIR ALGERNON DE HORSEY, K.C.B.

This story contains a very interesting but, as most would say, fantastic account of an imaginary war which, however improbable the result may appear, is deserving of close examination.

I have never wavered in my opinion that a sufficient land force and provision for maintaining a supply of food in war are absolutely necessary, and that, if these requirements are not provided, our existence as a nation remains at stake. Even Lord Haldane, when Secretary of State for War, stated that "All the foreigner had got to do was to cut off our food supply." Our position was rightly compared, by the late Sir John Colomb in Parliament, to that of "An unvictualled ocean citadel." In writing to the Press I have ever claimed the absolute importance of food supply, and I have repeatedly suggested one of the three following courses:—

(1.) The establishment of granaries to maintain always a three months' supply of grain.
(2.) The encouragement of farmers always to keep their harvest in rick for one year.
(3.) To induce at least double the present area of wheat cultivation by a tax on foreign supplies.

Failing provision of food for our people, we continue to run a deadly risk of ceasing to exist as an Empire and the loss of all our Colonies.

## ADMIRAL SIR COMPTON DOMVILE, K.C.B.

Having read with much interest Sir A. Conan Doyle's story, I am compelled to say that I think it most improbable, and more like one of Jules Verne's stories than any other author I know—that a submarine could keep the sea alone for that length of time without replenishing the oil fuel and other necessaries which are usually carried in a depot ship, whose presence would make these depredations impossible. Another point is that if we were engaged in a war with one of the Eastern Powers, the Thames would not be used for receiving supplies.

Ships from the west would probably use Milford Haven, a fortified port with narrow entrance, strong tides, and dangerous rocks at the entrance which would make submarine work more difficult; and ships from the south would probably use Plymouth. As to keeping the railroad open through France and a tunnel, in order to feed the country, this would probably involve France in war. I have no doubt a tunnel could be more easily destroyed than the number of food-ships described in this story.

Submarines have no doubt been much improved in recent years, and their radius of action much greater than formerly, as was proved in the recent manœuvres, but I am afraid they are not yet capable of the wonderful performances described in this article.*

* [The story deals with the submarine of the immediate future.—A.C.D.]

## ADMIRAL C. C. PENROSE FITZGERALD.

Sir A. Conan Doyle's clever story of the exploits of a few submarines in starving the British Isles into surrender may prove to be a useful argument in favour of a Channel Tunnel and of Tariff Reform, as the British public will not recognize the extreme improbability of the technicalities with which he deals.

I do not myself think that any civilized nation will torpedo unarmed and defenceless merchant ships.* I think the danger will be farther afield, and that it will arise from our short-sighted policy of failing to maintain enough cruisers—or anything like enough—to protect our great trade routes.

The food question is undoubtedly at the heart of the matter; and anything that can rouse public opinion to deal with it *before* war comes upon us, either by Tariff Reform, Channel Tunnel, or Government storage of foodstuffs, must be all to the good.

*[With all deference, I think that we must deal with what is possible, not with what we hope or think.—A.C.D.]

## ADMIRAL WILLIAM HANNAM HENDERSON.

I agree with Sir Arthur Conan Doyle that the development of the submarine has modified the aspects of naval warfare, and, though I do not think there will be opportunity or possibility of carrying out such operations as he describes with large ones inside the estuary of the Thames, I conceive there will be nothing to prevent their doing so at the entrances to the Channel and the Irish Sea, which will provide a menace to our food supply which has not hitherto existed, and

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which, so far, there seems to be no means of preventing. I do not think that much, if any, damage can be done by a twelve-pounder—a ship has only to proceed at full speed to make the use of one by a submarine in chase impossible. Their only effective weapon is the torpedo.

Much greater numbers of submarines will be required to effect even a part of the destruction indicated. Big ships do not sink quickly. I do not think that territorial waters will be violated, or neutral vessels sunk. Such will be absolutely prohibited, and will only recoil on the heads of the perpetrators. No nation would permit it, and the officer who did it would be shot.

Although the losses may be greater, I do not think they will be sufficient to stop the food supply. Submarines are effective only in daylight. The menace of the submarine affects the commerce of all nations; the antidote to it is the prohibition of capture at sea, except within the area of blockade.*

*[It is only to us that the commerce means life or death.—A.C.D.]

### Mr. FRED. T. JANE, Editor of "Fighting Ships," etc., inventor of the Naval War Game.

The situation outlined by Sir A. Conan Doyle is more or less technically impossible at the present time. There is, however, every reason to believe that in a very few years (say four) submarines capable of performances such as he contemplates will exist. On the other hand, equal or greater developments in air-craft and wireless are also to be expected, and I have taken this into account in indicating how I think that the British Admiralty would meet the situation outlined in his dramatic story.

A disavowal of International Law by any Power is always possible, but "every bane has its antidote," and those who hit below the belt may expect to find their blows returned in kind. An outlaw has no rights, and personally, were I a British officer concerned and Captain Sirius and his crew fell into my hands, I should have no hesitation whatever in hanging them all without trial, *pour encourager les autres!* To save millions of Britishers from starvation anything likely to achieve that end would be justifiable.*

I am of opinion that the Admiralty, so soon as it heard that an inoffensive British merchant ship and many of its crew had been sunk without warning, would issue orders somewhat as follows:—

"All incoming merchant ships to be stopped by wireless and ordered to collect at a certain rendezvous, where all available light cruisers, torpedo craft, submarines, and aircraft will meet and convoy them—aircraft scouting ahead.

"On locating a hostile submarine an aircraft will inform convoy by wireless, so that its course can be diverted. The aircraft is to follow the enemy and endeavour to drag out his periscopes with grapnels, standing by to drop bombs should the submarine come to the surface.

"Should any of the convoy be torpedoed, immediate search for submarines is to be made in the vicinity—light craft using grapnels with mines attached.

"No quarter to be given, and should any of the enemy be captured alive they are to be hanged immediately as pirates. This is to apply to *any* Norlander, whether engaged in piracy or not.

"N.B.—This last paragraph to be communicated immediately to the Press, which is to be requested to emphasize it with heavy type and to repeat it in every edition published. The enemy is bound to try to obtain information from British newspapers, and constantly reading this is bound to tell on his *morale*.

"It is obvious that the enemy will not willingly waste torpedoes or ammunition in attacking outward-bound ships, so these will sail as usual, but in groups of three instead of singly. It is likely that small ships only will be stopped for information purposes. So far as possible, therefore, small detachments of troops will be put on board each such ship, with orders to lie hid and open fire without warning on anyone on the deck of any submarine pirate coming up and ordering the ship to heave to. As the submarine is practically certain to come close alongside it will also be easy to pick off any further members of the crew who come on deck, and in most cases it should be possible for one of the three ships to run down the pirate in the confusion.

"All available trawlers, yachts, tugs, and motor-boats are to patrol the estuaries of trade ports, towing grapnels. This also applies to British bays and harbours which might be used as temporary bases by the enemy.

"As the enemy will presumably lie by at night on the surface, the various units will probably attempt communication by wireless. Consequently all British wireless inside the area of operations is forbidden except in case of most extreme urgency, and no British submarine is to use wireless in any circumstances whatever. All destroyers and light cruisers are to listen and sweep in circles towards the spots any wireless messages appear to proceed from—impossible to-day; but fairly certain to be quite as possible as the *Iota* three or four years hence. Any submarine located with wireless mast up is to be sunk immediately by gunfire—inquiries afterwards. Airships to be on similar duty. Destroyers are generally to sweep for submarines on the surface at night—observing the general motto, 'Sink first—inquire afterwards.'

"The enemy probably has some secret base on his own shores. This must be located as quickly as possible. Since the enemy is piratical, the best means to achieve this end is the merciless destruction of every Norland building within range of our blockading force, along the entire coastline. In the event of the base being discovered by this means (a big fire and explosion), destroyers and light cruisers will approach the base each night after dark and use any means to destroy the hostile submarines which sooner or later will come there to replenish stores, etc.

"In the whole of these defensive operations it is to be remembered that the enemy has adopted piratical tactics and that Terror must be met by Terror. The destroyers of starving and defenceless British millions *must* be regarded as *vermin* and treated as such by the defenders of the Empire. Every latitude is allowed to all commanding officers—and no questions will be allowed as to the treatment and execution of Norlanders, no matter how severe. Those who disregard International Law must be taught that even Anarchy is a game at which two can play."

Roughly, I think that this is, somehow, how the case would be met by the British Admiralty. A strong Government would, of course, also clap any pro-Norlanders into prison or execute them offhand on the principle of "desperate diseases require desperate remedies." It would also probably render it a capital offence to raise the price of foodstuff and trust to its own measures to keep up supplies.

But with things and fads and Party politics as they are, it is difficult to conceive of any Government being ready *instantly* to adopt the only safe course. And so, though I am convinced that the situation pictured by Sir A. Conan Doyle could easily be met and defeated *were the right course taken*, I am also firmly of opinion that the pseudo-humanitarianism of the present day, coupled with the Party-political spirit, would prevent the Admiralty from exercising a free hand.

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Consequently the only *safe* defence against an attack in the near future such as depicted lies in the establishment of national granaries or Channel Tunnels.

What Sir A. Conan Doyle suggests as a possibility for the submarines of to-morrow is a possibility for the "tramps" of a certain Power to accomplish to-day—and perhaps a more difficult problem still.

With national granaries, etc., a Captain Sirius might do his worst and none of us bother much, if at all. There is not the least need to emulate Joseph in Egypt. A law whereby all foodstuff remained in bond from a period beginning with one day and ending with six months would easily meet the situation, and cost far less than Channel Tunnels or hypothetical submarine food-carriers.†

*[You have to catch them first.—A.C.D.]

†[Tunnels should cost nothing, but bring revenue.—A.C.D.]

## ADMIRAL SIR WILLIAM KENNEDY, G.C.B.

I have read Sir A. Conan Doyle's brochure with interest and amusement.

The story is very ingeniously worked up, and, although I cannot believe that the whole import trade of Great Britain could be destroyed by so small a force, it is quite likely that a few submarines, commanded by daring men, might do a lot of damage before they were wiped out.

The writer assumes that our own submarines were doing nothing all the time.*

The moral of the story is, of course, that we should have vast stores of grain in this country, in which opinion I cordially concur.

The question of a Channel Tunnel is another thing about which there is considerable diversity of opinion. Having already expressed mine in the *Times*, I can only repeat what I then said—that, as "God made us an island, by all means let us remain so."

*[I don't see how a submarine can fight a submarine.—A.C.D.]

## Mr. B. EYRES MONSELL, R.N., M.P.

Sir A. Conan Doyle's story, in my opinion, will be of great value in vividly bringing to the minds of those who read it the paramount importance of our food supplies in time of war. You ask me if I consider the danger as described in the story to be a real one. I think it is, but I also think that the submarines had phenomenal luck; secondly, one must realize that in sinking neutral ships out of hand the submarines were acting piratically, according to international law. This would certainly have brought many first-class Powers into direct conflict with our enemy, undeterred by the fear of engaging in operations against a powerful belligerent.

As regards meeting the danger, I believe the great majority of experts are of the opinion that, at present, air-craft are practically the only way of combating the submarine.

I am very glad that this question of food supplies is being ventilated, for it is a vital question for the peoples of Great Britain.

## Mr. DOUGLAS OWEN, writer and lecturer on naval subjects.

Four-fifths of our daily bread and a large proportion of our other food is sea-borne. A small band, myself one of the number, have for years been calling attention to the potential danger of the fact. Over and over again, at public meetings and in the Press, have we urged that a scheme should be prepared in peace for the adequate supply of bread to the people on the outbreak of war. The danger was very real a decade or two ago, when our naval predominance was greater than it is to-day, and when the potentialities of the submarine were comparatively small. In the interval, on the one hand, our naval predominance has diminished; on the other, the submarine has evolved into a wide-range weapon of the most deadly possibilities. Till now, all efforts to arouse the public to the danger of a food-shortage on the outbreak of war, and to the paramount necessity for providing against it, have fallen dead. Sir Conan Doyle's story is likely to effect results for which we have striven in vain.

By some it may be thought that for a popular writer to employ his talents in the creation of general alarm is to make ill use of them. If so, I think they will, on reflection, agree with those who hold, on the contrary, that a far-seeing citizen who places before his slumbering countrymen a graphic and awakening picture of a danger hanging over them is rendering them the highest service. But the author has painted his picture, this terrible picture, from outside. To have painted it from within—painted it depicting the country's markets swept bare of food owing to a panic rush on the part of the well-to-do, determined at all costs to provision themselves against the unknown possibilities of attack on our supplies; painted it to show an alarmed and hungry people's growing and clamorous demand for bread; painted it to show the pressure thus created on a distracted Government—would have made it still more terrible.

The safeguarding of our sea-borne supplies must needs be entrusted to the Navy, and the resourcefulness of our naval men is great; but none the less must we ashore, at all costs, be prepared for the dire consequence of short supplies. If Sir Conan Doyle's story should at any rate awake us to the urgent need for such preparation he will have placed the nation under lasting obligation.

## ADMIRAL SIR EDWARD HOBART SEYMOUR, G.C.B.

The story is like all Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's writings; full of go, and impressive. For us it is probably well we should be alarmists. The submarines are described as doing what no doubt with very good fortune they might do, and that is the view taken.

With regard to starving England out, it must be remembered that all our western coasts are open to the ocean, where the space to land at is very extensive, and, as the open sea is less favourable to submarines than the Channel waters, home routes could be changed.*

*[I think Captain Sirius fairly provided against the latter contention.—A.C.D.]

## Mr. ARNOLD WHITE, Author of "The Navy and Its Story," etc.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle has placed his finger on the neuralgic nerve-centre of the British Empire—*i.e.*, the precarious arrival of our food-supply since super-Dreadnoughts were superseded by super-submarines. The little Powers being friendly to England, the danger, when it comes, will probably come from a Great Power with oversea trade of its own to guard. By mining the Narrow Seas on both sides, submarine attack and defence will probably be transferred to deep water. There is no reason to doubt that our Admiralty is fully alive to the change in our position in respect to convoy and to submarine aggression on the trade routes of both Britain and her foe. But Sir Arthur's article gives furiously to think, and is a national service.

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# Queer "First-Night" Incidents.

## Illustrated by Bert Thomas.

The following article contains the views of some of the leading American dramatic critics on the most memorable incidents they can recall. We hope to follow it with another in which well-known English critics will describe their most interesting experiences.

MR. W.E. M'CANN, the dramatic critic of the *Baltimore News*, selects the following as being the most amusing and curious of his first-night recollections.

"'The Birth of Venus,'" he says, "was the name of a play from the French acted for the first time on any stage at Albaugh's Lyceum Theatre in Baltimore on February 12th, 1895. With a party I had a box, and the audience was large and even brilliant, for Edward J. Henley, an admirable actor, and a brother of the noted poet, W. E. Henley, was at the head of the cast, supported by persons of reputation. It was hinted through the newspapers that the piece was 'daring,' and we found out later that the intrepidity of the author was shown in the turn of the plot, which concerned a birth-mark on a young woman's knee. She was the Venus of the story. She had sat to an artist, and he had reproduced the birth-mark in his painting. It seems also that she was married; hence the husband would be curious to know how the artist became aware of the birth-mark.

"On this night of the *première* there was a good deal of anxiety on account of this rather risky theme, and also some hopefulness. Mr. Henley was sure it would make a sensation. Intensely nervous naturally, he was more so than ever, and, hearing this, I went back to see him. The musicians were already in their places; the theatre was crowded, the ascent of the curtain was near at hand. Mr. Henley, dressed for his part, was standing at the top of the stairway leading to dressing-rooms beneath the stage, and all about were the stage hands, the characters that were to begin the scene, and some men in evening clothes.

"It was too late to speak to Mr. Henley, so I returned to my box and waited expectantly to see the curtain go up immediately. But it did not go up; the musicians had ceased to play and were gazing at it patiently; the audience sat in silence, wondering at the delay. The delay was so great that I again went back by the rear of the boxes to the stage. And now the greatest confusion and dismay reigned, for Mr. Henley had unaccountably disappeared.

"He had disappeared! A moment ago he was with the throng and ready; now he was nowhere to be found. Search high and low was instituted, and anxious faces were to be seen on all sides. There were all sorts of surmises. Had he taken fright and left the uncertain enterprise to its fate?

"Suddenly he reappeared, coming up with disordered dress and disturbed countenance by the little stairway from the regions under the stage where were situated a number of dressing-rooms. The explanation was simple; from the dressing-rooms there was a route all the way under the auditorium to the front of the house, and in a hurry he had followed it to communicate with the box-office. Usually a small gas-jet cast an illumination upon the boarded pathway, but it had become extinguished, and Mr. Henley, pursuing his gloomy journey alone, had lost his way.

"His experience was certainly terrifying. About him were the great pipes from the furnace, boilers and other mysterious engines, and little pathways led in various unknown directions. Knowing that the time for the curtain had passed and that there must be alarm, he shouted vigorously, awaking the echoes of the dismal place. Finally his voice was heard, and an attaché of the house, who also was pursuing his way through the locality and knew it thoroughly, heard his voice and rescued him.

"It was too late for me to return to my

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box; up went the curtain, and I decided to remain where I was until the close of the first act. As I moved towards the prompter's desk I noticed for the second time a little girl of about thirteen, dark and slender, and extremely pretty, sitting on the rung of a ladder that led up into the 'flies.' She was crying softly, and some people stood about her in sympathy. I leaned over and asked the child what was the matter.

"'I have lost Dick,' she said, with a sob. 'But he will come back—I know he will come back!'

"Who was Dick? One of the women explained that the name of the little girl was Jane, and that on that afternoon, while the window was up, the weather being rather warm for the season, and while Jane was feeding and caressing Dick, her mocking-bird, with the door of the cage open, the bird had suddenly darted through the door, flown to the window, and disappeared.

"Jane continued to weep and to declare that Dick would come back, and after an expression of sympathy I went on down to the proscenium entrance, where I could see the stage.

"The play was moving very nicely. I could see from this point the people in the boxes on the opposite side, and they were evidently pleased. Rapidly the pungent dialogue passed, and gratifying laughter followed. The actors were telling the story that was to introduce the large painting of Venus rising from the foam of the sea—the crucial part of the plot.

"Suddenly behind me, in a child's voice, I heard the cry, 'There's Dick! He has come back!'

"I looked in the direction of the cry and saw little Jane with her rapturous gaze fixed upward, whither other eyes were turned. A bird of some kind was slowly moving from one side of the stage to the other far up in the 'flies.' Evidently it was a bat—some newly-awakened bat that had made its home for the winter in a high corner of the theatre and had been roused from its hibernated sleep by the warmth, the lights, and the noise.

"Backwards and forwards it passed, in a slow, waving flight, and presently, descending a little, it crossed above the 'apron' and passed out into the auditorium. Here, gracefully, with a wide, sweeping motion, now rising high, now going down, it crossed and recrossed, and described wide circles, evidently to the alarm of the women in the house.

"In a minute or two, however, the bat made another encircling turn, and again crossed the footlights and rose upward to its old place in the 'flies,' where it finally disappeared.

"Of the remainder of the performance I have little recollection except that the play was listened to faithfully, and the actors, with polite consideration, were recalled.

"I thought no more of the bat; but five years later, as they say solemnly in the melodramas, I was sitting in my room at the newspaper office one radiant and warm June afternoon, with the sun at the window, thinking of the country, and, as Richard Le Gallienne says, of green dingles and bramble coverts and bright little chapels of the wild rose:—

> Beautiful glooms, soft dusks in the noonday fire—
> Wildwood privacies, closets of lone desire,
> Chamber from chamber parted with waving arras of leaves—

when two persons suddenly stood in the doorway.

"One was a short old lady with grey hair and countenance frosty but kindly, and the other a tall and beautiful young woman, who, smiling and advancing, said simply:—

"'I am Jane.'

"For a moment I did not recall her, and then suddenly I saw the slim, dark, prettily-formed little girl of the night of 'The Birth of Venus.' Jane, I may mention, was not her real name; it was another that in course of time became quite well known.

"I rose and she gave me her hand, and, laughing a good deal, we talked about the bat and how it had helped to ruin the first night of the play. And so we chatted for a while, and finally Jane said:—

"'You must come and see me. I am now in summer vaudeville, and am playing at the —— Park,' and she mentioned a popular suburban resort.

"And thereupon she and the old lady, who was her mother—not the conventional mother of the actress, but one who stood actually in that relation—told me rapidly and in great detail of Jane's success—of how she had appeared in various theatres and parks and sang and danced and gave imitations, and was quite wonderful altogether. There was nothing for it but that I should promise to come and see it all—and, of course, if I liked it, write just a few words of my impressions.

"So, with this understanding, we parted, and that night I made my way to the crowded and brilliant Park. I had a front seat, near the little stage, under the trees and the stars, and with the audience, keenly alive, all about me.

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"And pretty soon, after various acts, on came Jane, in her becoming pink costume, and looking very beautiful, and gave one or two songs in a rather weak but very sweet voice, and executed some graceful dances, particularly a Spanish one with castanets. And finally, for the last encore, she gave her imitations of Sarah Bernhardt, Anna Held, and Mrs. Fiske, as well as I recollect—and, I must confess, not the least bit like the originals. However, the audience knew no difference, and they passed triumphant. Then, seizing my opportunity, I stole away.

"As I walked down the long board-walk passageway, lined with oaks, elms, and poplars, and lighted with Chinese lanterns, to the gate and the cars, I thought of the evil omens on the first night of 'The Birth of Venus,' and of how they had foreshadowed disaster to the amusing, well-written, well-acted play. The nightmare experience of Mr. Henley was a presage of misfortune, so likewise the untimely emergence from his winter slumbers of the black bat."

Mr. Channing Pollock has been writing dramatic criticism nearly twenty years. During that time he has attended about six thousand performances, of which number half were first performances and seventeen performances of plays from his own pen.

Of humorous incidents he has seen hundreds. The funniest occurred at the first performance of "The Nazarene" in Chicago, when the Christian maiden was dropped among the lions, and the lions tried to break out through the other side of their cage. But Mr. Pollock's "queerest" first night was not a first night in a theatre, or in America, nor was it a first night attended in a professional capacity.

"It was in San Salvador," says Mr. Pollock, "in 1894. The quaint capital of this anachronistic republic had been without amusement for some time. A month or so before the first night to which I refer, we residents of the city were delighted to hear that we were to be visited by a circus. Work on the 'tent' was begun in the *plaza*. The 'tent' had corrugated iron sides and a canvas top. Later on, the troupe arrived at La Libertad. An accident in landing injured two of the principal performers. The opening was postponed until their recovery.

"Some weeks later the circus began its season. The *haut monde* of San Salvador, most of it coffee-coloured, attended the opening. The box next that in which we were seated was occupied by President Carlos Ezeta. Other boxes held a hundred or more officers of the army. Soldiers were sprinkled about the 'bleachers.'

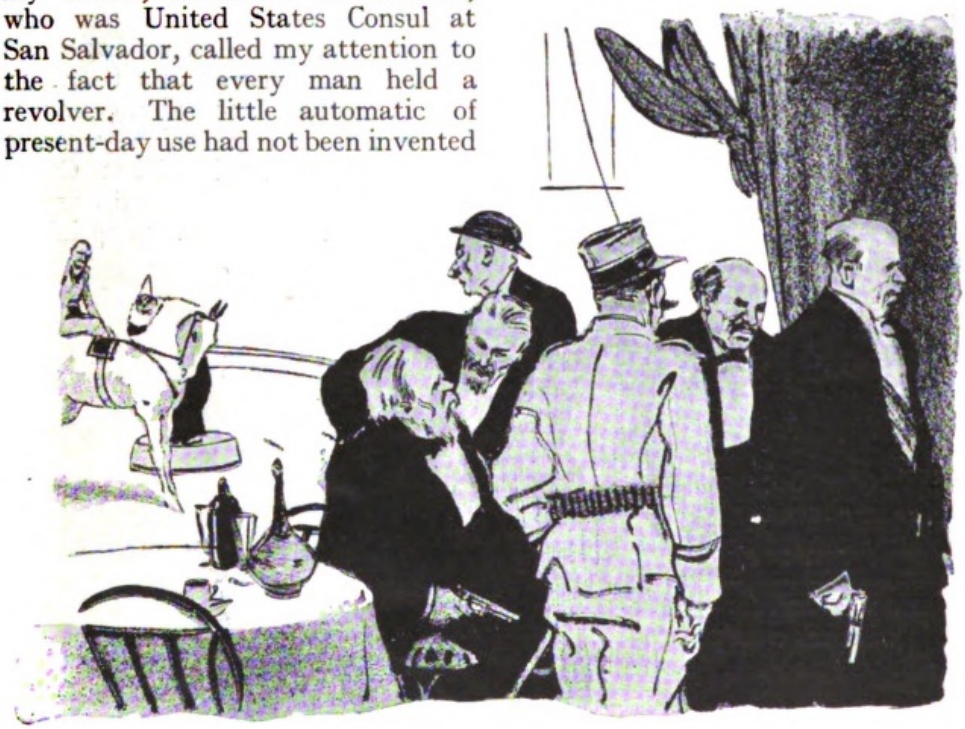


"THE CHRISTIAN MAIDEN WAS DROPPED AMONG THE LIONS, AND THE LIONS TRIED TO BREAK OUT THROUGH THE OTHER SIDE OF THEIR CAGE."



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"The circus was grotesque. We were smiling at a riding act, whose principal was suspended by a rope from a revolving spar, when a man in the uniform of a sergeant entered the President's box and handed him a bit of paper. Ezeta rose, hesitated, and said something to the gentlemen in attendance. Then they rose in turn, and quietly the party left the box. As they filed past us my father, Alexander L. Pollock, who was United States Consul at San Salvador, called my attention to the fact that every man held a revolver. The little automatic of present-day use had not been invented then. A 41-calibre Colt glistened in the hand of the President.



"THEN THEY ROSE IN TURN, AND QUIETLY THE PARTY LEFT THE BOX."

"Half an hour later began an exodus of the soldiery. There was no public announcement, no trumpet call, no filing out of an orderly body of troopers. Little brown men came into the 'tent,' made their way about quickly and silently, whispered to the uniform wearers, and one by one, two by two, all the officers and soldiers left the show. I was very young, and curiosity mastered me. I, too, rose and started out. At the door I was confronted by half-a-dozen officers, and gently but firmly informed that I must remain in the 'tent.'

"The performance continued to its end. The hour was eleven. And then the acrobats who had opened the show came back and repeated their turn. The second act followed. Slowly it dawned upon us that the management had been ordered to go on with the circus until further notice—to keep the only people in town who might have guessed what had happened, and to prevent their spreading the news until its spreading could do no harm.

"The air surcharged with excitement, the performance continued. From outside, in the *plaza*, came the sound of commands, the rattle of galloping bodies of cavalry, the tramp of feet. Inside, before unseeing eyes, the unhappy acrobats, and clowns, and equestrians repeated their little 'stunts' time and time again. No one paid any attention. There was no applause. The silence was broken only by half-hearted cries from the ring, excited whispers from seat to seat, the marching of armed men in the *plaza*.

"Finally, at two in the morning, in the middle of a juggling act, the performance ended. We were released. On the way home we passed hundreds of soldiers. The town was policed to the limit of its resources. Every corner sentry-box held half-a-dozen armed men. There was a guard about the Casa Blanca, and another around the red-brick residence of the President. And through the streets marched the squads of soldiers that, within an hour, were to begin the work of conscription.

"Santa Ana had fallen. Vice-President Ezeta had been surprised in the theatre there, and had barely escaped to take command, outside the city, of what men could be sent him from San Salvador. We had witnessed the beginning of the revolution that was to result in the unseating of Carlos Ezeta, in the flight of Antonio Ezeta to San Francisco, and incidentally in the death of my father, who had sat beside me at that first-night performance which lasted more than six hours."

Mr. Elmer K. Rupp, dramatic critic of the *Pittsburg Press*, recalls several first-night incidents, most of them of an amusing

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character. Six or seven years ago he was nvited by a professional friend to visit a neighbouring town to witness a semi-professional, semi-amateur performance that he had been chosen to direct, and which was to be put on for charitable purposes. It was one of those popular war dramas, and the ocal military company was included in the cast to make up the necessary number.

"The house was crowded," writes Mr. Rupp, "and, as was usual with houses in the maller towns in those days, not too well provided with exits. The play was going forward apparently without a hitch, although ny friend was storming as only a professional who has amateurs to deal with could storm, and pointing out mistakes in language more forcible than polite. Tiring of being back of the scenes, I went to the front of the house for the second act, which my friend had assured me would be well worth viewing.

"I had just reached my seat when, by some mishap, the footlights, which were gas-ets, came in contact with the tapestry rope that ran along the front of the stage. In an nstant it was ablaze, and some fool in the audience jumped to his feet and got ready to rush to the aisle. That was a signal for the start of a stampede. But before it could gather its full force, two or three men sitting in the middle of the house joined their voices in the cry of 'Sit down,' and just then the fat German comedian came to the front of the stage from the 'wings' with a little tin bucket of water. It couldn't have held more than a pint, and this he dumped on the blaze. Then he made an excruciatingly funny exit. My friend, who was playing a negro part, entered from the 'wings,' spat on the flame, and thereby started a laugh which ended all chance of a panic. The audience howled, and ere they had recovered their equanimity the stage crew with a couple of buckets of water had put out the fire. It was a narrow escape from a great horror, and it was due entirely to the quick wit of the young fellow who was playing the German comedian and the equally quick wit of my friend that there was not a record of lives lost and horrible scenes described in the papers of the following day."

Mr. Burns Mantle, dramatic critic of the *New York Evening Mail* and *Munsey's Magazine*, harks back twelve or fourteen years for the funniest incident during his career as a recorder of plays. It was in a Western theatre, and the attraction was Lincoln J. Carter's "The Tornado." Mr. Carter, it may be mentioned, was at that time famous for his sensational scenic effects. In the words of the Press agent, they were "colossal."

"As I recall it," explained Mr. Mantle, "the heroine had escaped with her child, had mounted a more or less fractious horse down stage, and started up a run-way representing a tortuous mountain road. Immediately she disappeared, and a change of scene revealed a deep chasm spanned by a bridge. On one side the villain and his friends, urged on by the pattering hoof-beats of an approaching horse, were hard at work knocking down the supports of the bridge, which presently crashed to the depths below. On the opposite side the heroine's friends were



"THE BUCKET COULDN'T HAVE HELD MORE THAN A PINT, AND THIS HE DUMPED ON THE BLAZE."

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shouting wildly for her to turn back; the bridge was gone. But on she came, the hoof-beats growing momentarily more distinct.

"Suddenly the horse appeared at the edge of the ravine, hesitated, then gathered itself together, rather awkwardly, it seemed, in the half-light, preparatory to making the leap. The warning shouts of the terror-stricken friends were redoubled. Despite them the animal bounded into the air, got half-way across the chasm, and stuck, its mechanical legs working furiously backwards and forwards as it pawed the atmosphere, the steel wires that held it suspended quivering like taut piano-strings.

"The audience gasped, then broke into loud laughter at the sight of the modern Brünnhilde swinging between heaven and earth on the back of a mechanical charger. The curtain was hastily lowered, and the manager came forward to explain that, owing to the hurried preparations, the mechanism had not worked properly. But if the audience would remain patiently in its seats and strive to control its mirth the leap for life would be repeated.



"THE ANIMAL GOT HALF-WAY ACROSS THE CHASM AND STUCK."

"Again the curtain rose on the shouting crowd, and again the horse was heard coming up the road. A second time it made the leap and a second time it stuck in mid-air, with the four feet waving back and forth in a ludicrous effort to complete the jump. 'Get a automobile, lady; get a automobile,' shouted a man in the gallery.

"Just as the curtain was being lowered the wicked person who had destroyed the bridge, evidently completely mollified by the heroine's predicament, stepped forward, grabbed the performing horse by its unresisting tail, and calmly hauled it back into the enemy's territory. The audience by this time was in an uproar, and no further attempt was made to complete the sensation."

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# The Clever Cockatoo

## By E. C. Bentley

Author of "TRENT'S LAST CASE"

*Illustrated by Stanley Davis.*

This is another adventure of Philip Trent, the central figure of Mr. Bentley's recent novel, "Trent's Last Case," which is already one of the classics of detective fiction. Trent is an artist, still young; he sometimes turns to journalism at the request of his friend, a famous editor, who has discovered in him a peculiar talent for newspaper-detective work. He gets on well with everybody, and his lively, generous, quaintly-humorous personality has had much to do with the immense popularity of the novel in which he was introduced to the world.

"WELL, that's my sister," said Mrs. Lancey, in a low voice. "What do you think of her, now you've spoken to her?"

Philip Trent, newly arrived from England, stood by his hostess within the loggia of an Italian villa looking out upon a prospect of such loveliness as has enchanted and enslaved the Northern mind from age to age. Before the villa lay a long paved terrace, and by the balustrade of it a woman stood looking out over the lake and conversing with a tall, grey-haired man.

"Ten minutes is rather a short acquaintance," Trent replied. "Besides, I was attending rather more to her companion. Mynheer Scheffer is the first Dutchman I have met on social terms. One thing about Lady Bosworth is clear to me, though. She is the most beautiful thing in sight, which is saying a good deal."

Mrs. Lancey laughed.

"But I want you to take a personal interest in her, Philip; it means nothing, I know, when you talk like that. I care a great deal about Isabel; she is far more to me than any other woman. That's rather rare between sisters, I believe. And it makes me wretched to know that there's something wrong with her."

"With her health, do you mean? One wouldn't think so."

"Yes, but I fear it is that."

"Is it possible?" said Trent. "Why, Edith, the woman has the complexion of a child and the step of a racehorse and eyes like jewels. She looks like Atalanta in blue linen."

"Did Atalanta marry an Egyptian mummy?" inquired Mrs. Lancey.

"It is true," said Trent, thoughtfully, "that Sir Peregrine looks rather as if he had been dug up somewhere. But I think he owes much of his professional success to that. People like a great doctor to look more or less unhealthy."

"Perhaps they do; but I don't think the doctor's wife enjoys it very much. Isabel is always happiest when away from him—if he were here now she would be quite different from what you see. You know, Philip, their marriage hasn't been a success—I always knew it wouldn't be."

Trent shrugged his shoulders.

"Let us drop the subject, Edith. Tell me why you want me to know about Lady

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Bosworth having something the matter with her. I'm not a physician."

"No; but there's something very puzzling about it, as you will see; and you are clever at getting at the truth about things other people don't understand. Now, I'll tell you no more. I only want you to observe Bella particularly at dinner this evening, and tell me afterwards what you think. You'll be sitting opposite to her, between me and Agatha Stone. Now go and talk to her and the Dutchman."

"Scheffer's appearance interests me," remarked Trent. "He has a face curiously like Frederick the Great's, and yet there's a difference—he doesn't look quite as if his soul were lost for ever and ever."

"Well, go and ask him about it," suggested Mrs. Lancey.

When the party of seven sat down to dinner that evening, Lady Bosworth had just descended from her room. Trent perceived no change in her; she talked enthusiastically of the loveliness of the Italian evening, and joined in a conversation that was general and lively. It was only after some ten minutes that she fell silent, and that a new look came over her face.

Little by little all animation departed from it. Her eyes grew heavy and dull, her red lips were parted in a foolish smile, and to the high, fresh tint of her cheek there succeeded a disagreeable pallor.

All charm, all personal force had departed. It needed an effort to recall her quaint, vivacious talk of an hour ago, now that she sat looking vaguely at the table before her, and uttering occasionally a blank monosyllable in reply to the discourse that Mr. Scheffer poured into her ear. It was not, Trent told himself, that anything abnormal was done. It was the staring fact that Lady Bosworth was not herself, but someone wholly of another kind, that opened a new and unknown spring of revulsion in the recesses of his heart.

An hour later Mrs. Lancey carried Trent off to a garden-seat facing the lake.



"IT WAS ONLY AFTER SOME TEN MINUTES THAT SHE FELL SILENT, AND THAT A NEW LOOK CAME OVER HER FACE. LITTLE BY LITTLE ALL ANIMATION DEPARTED FROM IT."

"Well?" she said, quietly.

"It's very strange and rather ghastly," he answered, nursing his knee. "But if you hadn't told me it puzzled you, I should have thought it was easy to find an explanation."

"Drugs, you mean?" He nodded. "Of course everybody must think so. George does, I know. It's horrible!" declared Mrs.

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Lancey, with a thump on the arm of the seat. "Agatha Stone began hinting at it after the first few days. Gossiping cat! She loathes Isabel, and she'll spread it round everywhere that my sister is a drug-fiend. Philip, I asked her point blank if she was taking anything that could account for it. She was much offended at that; told me I had known her long enough to know she never had done and never would do such a thing. And though Isabel has her faults, she's absolutely truthful."





Trent looked on the ground. "Yes; but you may have heard——"

"Oh, I know! They say that kind of habit makes people lie and deceive who never did before. But you see, she is so completely herself, except just at this time. I simply couldn't make up my mind to disbelieve her. And, besides, if Bella is peculiar about anything, it's clean, wholesome, hygienic living. She has every sort of carbolicky idea. She never uses scent or powder or any kind of before-and-after stuff, never puts anything on her hair; she is washing herself from morning till night, but she always uses ordinary yellow soap. She never touches anything alcoholic, or tea, or coffee. You wouldn't think she had that kind of fad to look at her and her clothes; but she has; and I can't think of anything in the world she would despise more than dosing herself with things."

"How long has it been going on?"

"This is the seventh evening. I entreated her to see a doctor; but she hates the idea of being doctored. She says it's sure to pass off and that it doesn't make any difference to her general health. George, who has always been devoted to her, only talks to her now with an effort. Randolph Stone is just the same; and two days before you arrived the Illingworths and Captain Burrows both went earlier than they had intended — I'm certain, because this change in Isabel was spoiling their visit for them."

"She seems to get on remarkably well with Scheffer," remarked Trent.

"I know—it's extraordinary, but he seems more struck with her than ever."

"Well, he is; but in a lizard-hearted way of his own. He and I were talking just now after you left the dining-room. He spoke of Lady Bosworth in a queer, semi-scientific sort of way, saying she was very interesting to a medical man like himself. You didn't tell me he was one."

"I didn't know. George calls him an anthropologist, and disagrees with him about the races of Farther India. It's the one thing George does know something about, having lived there twelve years governing the poor things. They took to each other at once when they met last year, and when I asked him to stay here he was quite delighted. He only begged to be allowed to bring his cockatoo, as it could not live without him."

"Strange pet for a man," Trent observed. "He was showing off its paces to me this afternoon. Well, it seems he's greatly interested in these attacks of hers. He has seen nothing quite like them. But he is convinced the thing is due to what he calls a toxic agent of some sort. As to what, or how, or why, he is absolutely at a loss."

"Mr. Scheffer really is a wonderful person," the lady said. "He's lived for years among the most appalling savages in Dutch New Guinea, doing scientific work for his Government, and according to George they treat him like a sort of god. He's most attractive and quite kind really, I think, but there's something about him that makes me afraid of him."

"What is it?"

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"I think it is the frosty look in his eyes," replied Mrs. Lancey, drawing her shoulders together in a shiver.

"Perhaps that is the feeling about him in Dutch New Guinea," said Trent. "Did you tell me, Edith, that your sister began to be like this the very first evening she came here?"

"Yes. And it had never happened before, she declares."

"She came out from England with the Stones, didn't she?"

"Only the last part of the journey. They got on the train at Lucerne."

Trent looked back into the drawing-room at the wistful face of Mrs. Stone, who was playing piquet with her host. She was slight and pretty, with large, appealing eyes that never lost their melancholy, though she was always smiling.

"You say she loathes Lady Bosworth," he said. "Why?"

"Well, I suppose it's mainly Bella's own fault," confessed Mrs. Lancey, with a grimace. "You may as well know, Philip—you'll soon find out, anyhow—the truth is she *will* flirt with any man that she doesn't actively dislike. She's so brimful of life she can't hold herself in—or she won't, rather; she says there's no harm in it, and she doesn't care if there is. Several times she has practised on Randolph, and, although he's a perfectly safe old donkey if there ever was one, Agatha can't bear the sight of her."

"She seems quite friendly with her," Trent observed.

Mrs. Lancey produced through her delicate nostrils a sound that expressed a scorn for which there were no words.

"Well, what do you make of it, Philip?" his hostess asked, at length. "Myself, I simply don't know what to think. These queer fits of hers frighten me horribly. There's one dreadful idea, you see, that keeps occurring to me. Could it, perhaps, be"—Mrs. Lancey lowered her already low tone—"the beginning of insanity?"

He spoke reassuringly. "Oh, I shouldn't cherish that fancy. There are other things much more likely and much less terrible. Look here, Edith, will you try to arrange certain things for to-morrow, without asking me why? And don't let anybody know I asked you to do it—not even George. Until later on, at least. Will you?"

"How exciting!" Mrs. Lancey breathed. "Yes, of course, mystery-man. What do you want me to do?"

"Do you think you could manage things to-morrow so that you and I and Lady Bosworth could go out in the motor-boat on the lake for an hour or two in the evening, getting back in time to change for dinner—just the three of us and the engineer?"

She pondered. "Then the three of us could run down in the boat to San Marmette—it's a lovely little place—and be back before seven. In this weather it's really the best time of day for the lake."

"That would do admirably, if you could work it. And one thing more—if we do go as you suggest, I want you privately to tell your engineer to do just what I ask him to do—no matter what it is."

Mrs. Lancey worked it without difficulty. At five o'clock the two ladies and Trent, with a powerful young man of superb manners at the steering-wheel, were gliding swiftly southward, mile after mile, down the long lake. They landed at the most picturesque, and perhaps the most dilapidated and dirtiest, of all the lakeside villages, where, in the tiny square above the landing-place, a score of dusky infants were treading the measures and chanting the words of one of the immemorial games of childhood. While Mrs. Lancey and her sister watched them in delight Trent spoke rapidly to the young engineer, whose gleaming eyes and teeth flashed understanding.

Soon afterward they strolled through San Marmette, and up the mountain road to a little church, half a mile away, where a curious fresco could be seen.

It was close on half-past six when they returned, to be met by Giuseppe, voluble in excitement and apology. It appeared that while he had been fraternizing with the keeper of the inn by the landing-place certain *triste individui* had, unseen by anyone, been tampering maliciously with the engine of the boat, and had poured handfuls of dust into the delicate mechanism. Mrs. Lancey, who had received a private nod from Trent, reproved him bitterly for leaving the boat, and asked how long it would take to get the engine working again.

Giuseppe, overwhelmed with contrition, feared that it might be a matter of hours. Questioned, he said that the public steamer had arrived and departed twenty minutes since; the next one, the last of the day, was not due until after nine. Their excellencies could at least count on getting home by that, if the engine was not ready sooner. Questioned farther, he said that one could telephone from the post-office, and that food creditably cooked was to be had at the *trattoria*.

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Lady Bosworth was delighted. She declared that she would not have missed this occasion for anything. She had come to approve highly of Trent, who had made himself excellent company, and she saw her way to being quite admirable, for she was in dancing spirits.

It was a more than cheerful dinner that they had under a canopy of vine-leaves on a tiny terrace overlooking the lake. Twilight came on unnoticed, and soon afterwards appeared the passenger-boat, by which, Giuseppe advising it, they decided to return. It was as they sought for places on the crowded upper deck that Mrs. Lancey put her hand on Trent's arm. "There hasn't been a sign of it all the evening," she whispered. "What does that mean?"

"It means," murmured Trent, "that Lady Bosworth was prevented, by the merest accident, from dining at home in the ordinary way."

It was not until the following afternoon that Trent found an opportunity of being alone with his hostess in the garden.

"She is perfectly delighted at having escaped it last night," said Mrs. Lancey. "She says she knew it would pass off, but she hasn't the least notion how she was cured. Nor have I."

"She isn't," replied Trent. "Last night was only a beginning, and we can't get her unexpectedly stranded for the evening every day. The next move can be made now, if you consent to it. Lady Bosworth will be out until this evening, I believe?"

"She's gone shopping in the town. What do you want to do?"

"I want you to take me up to her room, and there I want you to look very carefully through everything in the place—in every corner of every box and drawer and bag and cupboard—and show me anything you find that might——"

"I should hate to do that!" Mrs. Lancey interrupted him, her face flushing.

"You would hate much more to see your sister again this evening as she was every evening before last night. Look here, Edith; the position is simple enough. Every day, about seven, Lady Bosworth goes into that room in her normal state to dress for dinner. Every day she comes out of it apparently as she went in, but turns queer a little later. Now is there any other place than that room where the mischief could happen?"

Mrs. Lancey frowned dubiously. For a few moments she stood carefully boring a hole in the gravel with one heel. Then, "Come along," she said, and led the way toward the house.

"Unless we take the floor up," said Mrs. Lancey, seating herself emphatically on the bed in her sister's room twenty minutes later, "there's nowhere else to look. I've taken everything out and pried into every hole and corner. There isn't a single lockable thing that is locked. There isn't a bottle or phial or pill-box of any sort to be found. So much for your suspicions. What interests you about that nail-polishing pad? You must have seen one before, surely."

"This ornamental design on hammered silver is very beautiful and original," replied Trent, abstractedly. "I have never seen anything quite like it."

"The same design is on the whole of the toilet-set," Mrs. Lancey observed, tartly, "and it shows to least advantage on the manicure-things. You are talking rubbish; and yet," she added, slowly, "you are looking rather pleased with yourself."

Trent turned round slowly. "I'm only thinking. Whose are the rooms on each side of this, Edith?"

"This side, the Stones'; that side, Mr. Scheffer's."

"Then I will go for a walk all alone and think some more. Good-bye."

Trent was not in the house when, three hours later, a rousing tumult broke out on the upper floor. Those below in the loggia heard first a piercing scream, then a clatter of feet on parquet flooring, then more sounds of feet, excited voices, other screams of harsh, inhuman quality, and a lively scuffling and banging. Mr. Scheffer, with a volley of guttural words of which it was easy to gather the general sense, headed the rush of the company upstairs.

"Gisko! Gisko!" he shouted, at the head of the stairway. There was another ear-splitting screech, and the cockatoo came scuttling and fluttering out of Lady Bosworth's room, pursued by three vociferating women servants. The bird's yellow crest was erect and quivering with agitation; it screeched furious defiance again as it leapt upon its master's outstretched wrist.

"Silence, devil!" exclaimed Mr. Scheffer, seizing it by the head and shaking it violently. "I know not how to apologize, Lancey," he declared. "The accursed bird has somehow slipped from his chain away. I left him in my room secure just before we had tea."


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"Never mind, never mind!" replied his host, who seemed rather pleased than otherwise with this small diversion. "I don't suppose he's done any harm beyond frightening the women. Anything wrong, Edith?" he asked, as they approached the open door of the bedroom, to which the ladies had already hurried. Lady Bosworth's maid was telling a voluble story.

"When she came in just now to get the room ready for Isabel to dress," Mrs. Lancey summarized, "she suddenly heard a voice say something, and saw the bird perched on top of the mirror, staring at her. It gave her such a shock that she dropped the water-can and fled; then the two other girls came and helped her, trying to drive it out. They hadn't the sense to send for Mr. Scheffer."

"Apologize, carrion!" commanded Gisko's master. The cockatoo uttered a string of Dutch words in a subdued croak. "He says he asks one thousand pardons, and he will sin no more," Mr. Scheffer translated. "Miserable brigand! Traitor!"

Lady Bosworth hurried out of her room.

"I won't hear the poor thing scolded like that," she protested. "How was he to know my maid would be frightened? He looks so wretched! Take him away, Mr. Scheffer, and cheer him up."

It was half an hour later that Mrs. Lancey came to her husband in his dressing-room.

"I must say Bella was very decent about Scheffer's horrid bird," she began. "Do you know what the little fiend had done?"

"No, my dear. I thought he had confined himself to frightening the maid out of her skin."

"Not at all. He had been having the time of his life. Bella saw at once that he had been up to mischief, but she pretended there was nothing. Now it turns out he has bitten the buttons off two pairs of gloves, chewed up a lot of hair-pins, and spoiled her pretty little manicure set. He's torn the lining out of the case, the silver handles are covered with beak-marks, two or three of the things he seems to have hidden somewhere, and the polishing-pad is a ruin."

"It's too bad!" declared Mr. Lancey, bending over a shoe.

"I believe you're laughing, George," said his wife, coldly.

He began to do so audibly. "You must admit it's funny to think of the bird going solemnly through a programme of mischief like that. I wish I could have seen the little beggar at it. Well, we shall have to get Bella a new nail-outfit. I'm glad she held her tongue about it just now."

"Why?"

"Because, my dear, we don't ask people to the house to make them feel uncomfortable—especially foreigners."

"Bella wasn't thinking of your ideal of hospitality. She held her tongue because she's taken a fancy to Scheffer. But, George, how do you suppose the little pest got in? The window was shut, and Hignett declares the door was too, when she went to the room."

"Then I expect Hignett deceives herself. Anyway, what does it matter? What I am anxious about is your sister's little peculiarity. As I've told you, I don't at all like the look of her having been quite normal yesterday evening, the one evening when she was away from the house by accident. I really am feeling miserably depressed, Edith. What I'm dreading now is a repetition of the usual ghastly performance to-night."

But neither that night, nor any night after, was that performance repeated. Lady Bosworth, free now of all apprehension, renewed and redoubled the life of the little company. And the lips of Trent were obstinately sealed.

Three weeks later Trent was shown into the consulting-room of Sir Peregrine Bosworth. The famous physician was a tall, stooping man of exaggerated gauntness, narrow-jawed, and high-nosed. He was courteous of manner and smiled readily; but his face was set in unhappy lines.

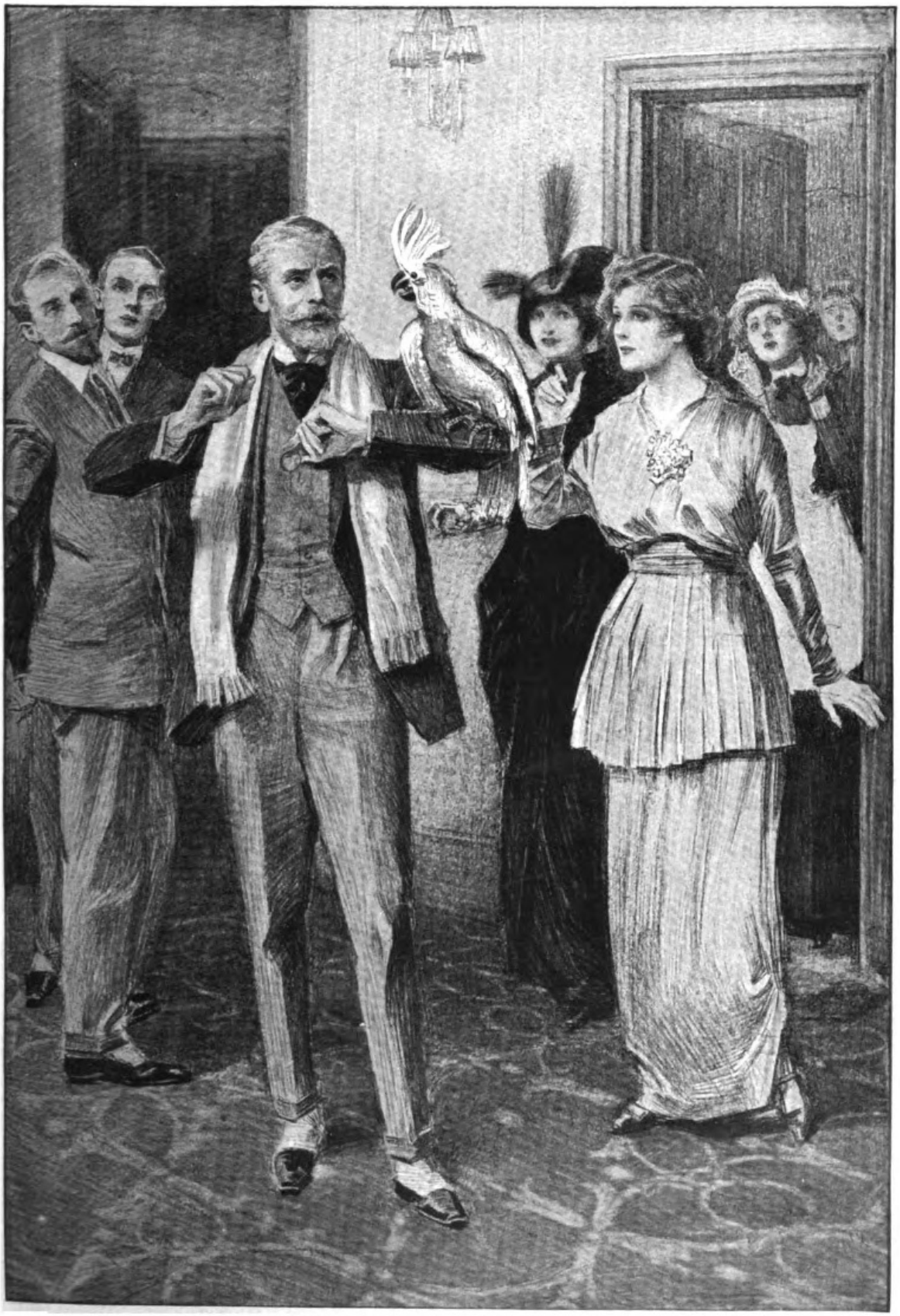
"Will you sit down, Mr. Trent?" said Sir Peregrine. "You wrote that you wished to see me upon a private matter concerning myself. I am at a loss to imagine what it can be, but, knowing your name, I had no hesitation in making an appointment."

Trent inclined his head. "I am obliged to you, Sir Peregrine. The matter is really important, and also quite private—so private that no person whatever knows the material facts besides myself. I won't waste words. I have lately been staying with the Lanceys, whom you know, in Italy. Lady Bosworth was also a guest there. For some days before my arrival she had suffered each evening from a curious attack of lassitude and vacancy of mind. I don't know what it was. Perhaps you do."

Sir Peregrine, immovably listening, smiled grimly. "The description of symptoms is a little vague. I have heard nothing of this, I may say, from my wife."

"It always came on at a certain time of the day, and only then. That time was a few minutes after eight, at the beginning of

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"'I WON'T HEAR THE POOR THING SCOLDED LIKE THAT,' SHE PROTESTED. 'HOW WAS HE TO KNOW THAT MY MAID WOULD BE FRIGHTENED?'"

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dinner. The attack passed off gradually after two hours or so."

The physician laid his clenched hand on the table between them. "You are not a medical man, Mr. Trent, I believe. What concern have you with all this?" His voice was coldly hostile now.

"Lots," answered Trent, briefly. Then he added, as Sir Peregrine got to his feet with a burning eye, "I know nothing of medicine, but I cured Lady Bosworth."

The other sat down again suddenly. His open hands fell upon the table and his dark face became very pale. "You——" he began with difficulty.

"I and no other, Sir Peregrine. And in a curiously simple way. I found out what was causing the trouble, and without her knowledge I removed it. It was—oh, the devil!" Trent exclaimed in a lower tone. For Sir Peregrine Bosworth, with a brow gone suddenly white and clammy, had first attempted to rise and then sunk forward with his head on the table.

Trent, who had seen such things before, hurried to him, pulled his chair from the table, and pressed his head down to his knees. Within a minute the stricken man was leaning back in his chair. He inspired deeply from a small bottle he had taken from his pocket.

"You have been overworking, perhaps," Trent said. "Something is wrong. I think I had better not——"

Sir Peregrine had pulled himself together. "I know very well what is wrong with me, sir," he interrupted, brusquely. "It is my business to know. That will not happen again. I wish to hear what you have to say, before you leave this house."

"Very well." Trent took a tone of colourless precision. "I was asked by Lady Bosworth's sister, Mrs. Lancey, to help in trying to trace the source of the disorder which attacked her every evening. I need not describe the signs of it, and I will not trouble you with an account of how I reasoned on the matter. But I found out that Lady Bosworth was, on these occasions, under the influence of a drug, which had the effect of lowering her vitality and clogging her brain, without producing stupefaction or sleep; and I was led to the conclusion that she was administering this drug to herself without knowing it."

He paused, and felt in his waistcoat pocket. "When Mrs. Lancey and I were making a search for something of the kind in her room, my attention was caught by the fine workmanship of a manicure-set on the dressing-table. I took up the little round box meant to contain nail-polishing paste, admiring its shape and decoration, and on looking inside it found it half-full of paste. But I have often watched the process of beautifying finger-nails, and it seemed to me that the stuff was of a deeper red than the usual pink confection; and I saw next that the polishing-pad of the set, though well-worn, had never been used with paste, which leaves a sort of dark incrustation on the pad. Yet it was evident that the paste in the little box had been used. It is useful sometimes, you see, to have a mind that notices trifles. So I jumped to the conclusion that the paste that was not employed as nail-polish was employed for some other purpose; and when I reached that point I simply put the box in my pocket and went away with it. I may say that Mrs. Lancey knew nothing of this, or of what I did afterwards."

"And what was that?" Sir Peregrine appeared now to be following the story with an ironic interest.

"Naturally, knowing nothing of such matters, I took it to the place that called itself 'English Pharmacy' in the town, and asked the proprietor what the stuff was. He looked at it, took a little on his finger, smelt it, and said it was undoubtedly lip-salve.

"It was then I remembered how, when I saw Lady Bosworth during one of her attacks, her lips were brilliantly red, though all the colour had departed from her face. That had struck me as very odd, because I am a painter, and naturally I could not miss an abnormality like that. Then I remembered another thing. One evening, when Lady Bosworth, her sister, and myself were prevented from returning to the house for dinner, and dined at a country inn, there had been no signs of her trouble; but I had noticed that she moistened her lips again and again with her tongue."

"You are observant," remarked Sir Peregrine, dispassionately, and again had recourse to his smelling-bottle.

"You are good enough to say so," Trent replied, with a wooden face. "On thinking these things over, it seemed to me probable that Lady Bosworth was in the habit of putting on a little lip-salve when she dressed for dinner in the evening; perhaps finding that her lips at that time of day tended to become dry, or perhaps not caring to use it in daylight, when its presence would be much more easily detected. For I had learned that she made some considerable parade of not using any kind of cosmetics or artificial aids to beauty; and that, of course, accounted for her carrying it in a box meant for manicure-

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"HE STOPPED AGAIN AND LOOKED IN SIR PEREGRINE'S EYES. THEY REMAINED FIXED UPON HIM WITH THE GAZE OF A STATUE."

paste, which might be represented as merely a matter of cleanliness, and at any rate was not to be classed with paint and powder. It was not pleasant to me to have surprised this innocent little deception; but it was as well that I did so, for I soon ascertained beyond doubt that the stuff had been tampered with.

"When I left the chemist's I went and sat in a quiet corner of the Museum grounds. There I put the least touch of the salve on my tongue, and awaited results. In five minutes I had lost all power of connected thought or will; I no longer felt any interest in my own experiment. I was conscious. I felt no discomfort, and no loss of the power of movement. Only my intelligence seemed to be paralyzed. For an hour I was looking out upon the world with the soul of an ox, placid and blank."

Trent now opened his fingers and showed a little round box of hammered silver, with a delicate ornamentation running round the lid. It was of about the bigness of a pill-box.

"It seemed best to me that this box should simply disappear, and in some quite natural, unsuspicious way. Merely to remove the salve would have drawn Lady Bosworth's attention to it and set her guessing. She did not suspect the stuff as yet, I was fully convinced; and I thought it well that the affair of her seizures should remain a mystery. Your eyes ask why. Just because I did not want a painful scandal in Mrs. Lancey's family—we are old friends, you see. And now here I am with the box, and neither Lady Bosworth nor any other person has the smallest inkling of its crazy secret but you and I."

He stopped again and looked in Sir Peregrine's eyes. They remained fixed upon him with the gaze of a statue.

"It was plain, of course," Trent continued, "that someone had got at the stuff immediately before she went out to Italy, or immediately on her arrival. The attacks began on the first evening there, two hours

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after reaching the house. Therefore any tampering with the salve after her arrival was practically impossible. When I asked myself who should have tampered with it before Lady Bosworth left this house to go out to Italy, I was led to form a very unpleasant conjecture."

Sir Peregrine stirred in his chair. "You had been told the truth—or a part of the truth—about our married life, I suppose?"

Trent inclined his head. "Three days ago I arrived in London, and showed a little of this paste to a friend of mine who is an expert analyst. He has sent me a report, which I have here." He handed an envelope across the table. "He was deeply interested in what he found, but I have not satisfied his curiosity. He found the salve to be evenly impregnated with a very slight quantity of a rare alkaloid body called purvisine. Infinitesimal doses of it produce effects on the human organism which he describes, as I can testify, with considerable accuracy. It was discovered, he notes, by Henry Purvis twenty-five years ago; and you will remember, Sir Peregrine, what I only found out by inquiry—that you were assistant to Purvis about that time in Edinburgh, where he had the Chair of medical jurisprudence and toxicology."

He ceased to speak, and there was a short silence. Sir Peregrine gazed at the table before him. Once or twice he drew breath deeply, and at length began to speak calmly.

"I shall not waste words," he said, "in trying to explain fully my state of mind or my action in this matter. But I will tell you enough for your imagination to do the rest. My feeling for my wife was an infatuation from the beginning, and is still. I was too old for her. I don't think now that she ever cared for me greatly; but she was too strong-minded ever to marry a wealthy fool. By the time we had been married a year I could no longer hide from myself that she had an incurable weakness for philandering. She has surrendered herself to it with less and less restraint, and without any attempt to deceive me on the subject. If I tried to tell you what torture it has been to me, you wouldn't understand. The worst was when she was away from me, staying with her friends. At length I took the step you know. It was undeniably an act of baseness, and we will leave it at that, if you please. If you should ever suffer as I do, you will modify your judgment upon me. I knew of my wife's habit, discovered by you, of using lip-salve at her evening toilette. On the night before her departure I took what was in that box and combined it with a preparation of the drug purvisine. The infinitesimal amount which would pass into the mouth after the application of the salve was calculated to produce for an hour or two the effects you have described, without otherwise doing any harm. But I knew the impression that would be produced upon normal men and women by the sight of anyone in such a state. I wanted to turn her attractiveness into repulsiveness, and I seem to have succeeded. I was mad when I did it. I have been aghast at my own action ever since. I am glad it has been frustrated. And now I should like to know what you intend to do."

Trent took up the box. "If you agree, Sir Peregrine, I shall drop this from Westminster Bridge to-night. And so long as nothing of the sort is practised again, the whole affair shall be buried. Yours is a wretched story, and I don't suppose any of us would find our moral fibre improved by such a situation. I have no more to say."

He rose and moved to the door. Sir Peregrine rose also and stood with lowered eyes, apparently deep in thought.

"I am obliged to you, Mr. Trent," he said, formally. "I may say, too, that your account of your proceedings interested me deeply. I should like to ask a question. How did you contrive that the box should disappear without its owner seeing anything remarkable in its absence?"

"Oh, easily," Trent replied, his hand on the door-knob. "After experimenting on myself, I went back to the house before tea-time, when no one happened to be in. I went upstairs to a room where a cockatoo was kept—a mischievous brute—took him off his chain, and carried him into Lady Bosworth's room. There I put him on the dressing-table, and teased him a little with the manicure things to interest him in them. Then I took away one of the pairs of scissors, so that the box shouldn't be the one thing missing, and left him shut in there to do his worst, while I went out of the house again. When I went he was ripping out the silk lining of the case, and had chewed up the silver handles of the things pretty well. After I had gone he went on to destroy various other things. In the riot that took place when he was found the disappearance of the little box and scissors became a mere detail. Certainly Lady Bosworth suspected nothing.

"I suppose," he added, thoughtfully, "that occasion would be the only time a cockatoo was of any particular use."

And Trent went out.

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FRANK WOOTTON, ACCOMPANIED BY HIS SISTER BRENDA, EXERCISING A JUMPER.

*From a Photograph by Central News.*

# The Fine Art of Jockeyship.

## Some Reminiscences and Personal Impressions.

## DESCRIBED BY FRANK WOOTTON.

In the following article Frank Wootton, one of the finest horsemen of modern times, gives his impressions on the art of jockeyship, and relates some reminiscences and personal experiences of race-riding. Wootton's rise to fame in the jockey world has been quite phenomenal in its rapidity. In 1906 he rode sixteen winners, in 1907 thirty-nine winners, in 1908 one hundred and twenty-nine winners, and in the following year headed the list of successful jockeys with a total of one hundred and sixty-five winning mounts.

I HAVE often been asked whether I consider that the art of race-riding deserves to be termed "a fine Art." Naturally enough, I find this an exceedingly difficult question to answer, but, at the same time, there is a simple, yet conclusive, proof ready at hand that the art of race-riding is by no means easy of acquirement. What is this proof? Simply that, while there are probably tens of thousands of stable-boys of one sort and another in England, but very few of these ever show sufficient ability in the saddle to justify their being given a mount in public, while a glance at the list of winning jockeys also goes to prove that the number of capable horsemen

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does not exceed more than a score or so. However, from whatever point of view one regards the art, knack, habit—call it what you will—of jockeyship, it seems that it is very frequently an hereditary art. In England, for example, such cases as those of the Cannons, the Wattses, the Rickabys, the Halseys, and the Loateses clearly prove this, while it would be easy to cite similar cases in other countries.

In regarding jockeyship as a fine art, I am naturally doing so in an entirely impartial manner, and in giving my views on the subject for what they are worth I am basing these on what my experience as a jockey—and, in a small way, I may claim to have had quite a lot of experience—has led me to believe is correct.

I suppose the question I have been most often asked is the following: "Do you think a really top-hole jockey is born, not made?" To a certain extent my own impression is that the first-class jockey is "made up" of a little bit of both. If he does not take to riding, and does not possess a few gifts from Nature which will enable him to ride, he would assuredly do better to make up his mind to ride in a bus, and not on the back of a horse. On the other hand, if he possesses a fair amount of natural aptitude and a genuine liking for race-riding, with practice and experience he should do well.

You see, it's this way. Race-riding to-day is at least as scientific as it ever was, and, in consequence, to hold his own with the best of his rivals—friendly rivals, of course; although, between ourselves, they are not always quite friendly—a jockey must possess more valuable qualifications than a good seat and good hands. The latter, I think, are generally more a gift of Nature than of practice. First and foremost he must ride with his head, and must also possess plenty of courage and dash, for, although I may be wrong, my own very strong belief is that these two exceedingly valuable qualifications, like patience and, in a minor degree, an accurate knowledge of pace, cannot be gained by precept, but must be born in a man.

Looking at the art of jockeyship from a broad point of view, I am inclined to think that the two most valuable essentials are head and hands. The jockey who rides with his head and takes advantage of every chance that comes his way in a race, and does not merely ride in the "hell-for-leather" or "pillar-to-post" style, will inevitably win more races than his less brainy brother artist, for the simple reason that the jockey who rides with his head knows precisely what his own horse is doing, and also has a pretty shrewd notion of what the other horses in the race are doing. Naturally enough, this faculty is rare, but I can at least say that some few riders I have known have possessed it in quite a remarkable degree.

By the way, when talking about the art of jockeyship, I am reminded that the members of but few professions come in for quite so much criticism, good, bad, and indifferent, as we jockeys, from arm-chair critics and others who seem to overlook the fact that it is always easy to win races from the grand stand.

As a matter of fact, of course, criticism of this sort, which is daily on the tongues of the hundreds of thousands of people interested in racing throughout the country, is not worth a moment's consideration, for all sorts of things must obviously happen in a race which critics on the stands cannot possibly appreciate. Thus, fifty yards or so from home a jockey's mount may appear to those on the stand to be simply "doddling" home. But suddenly something dashes up full of running, gets the leader sprawling, and after a sharp struggle, instead of winning by a comfortable length or so, as stand critics afterwards declare he ought to have done, the apparently easily winning horse gets "pipped" by a neck, and his jockey is, in consequence, blamed for riding a weak finish.

More likely than not he has done nothing of the kind. After all, a jockey cannot "come" without his horse, and if his mount is not of the courageous kind, and is not too partial to running his race out, a mistaken point of view may easily crop up, for of a sudden, in the case of faint-hearted horses, up goes the apparently easy winner's head, swish round and round goes his tail, and, before you can say "Jack Robinson," what looked from the stands like being an easy win is unexpectedly turned into a vexatious defeat.

Then, again, a jockey may frequently come in for a whole bunch of adverse criticism because, on some of his form, the horse on which he has ridden a losing race would appear to ought-to-have-been "a stone-cold certainty" for it. Because the horse lost the jockey is blamed. But why? Horses are not machines; neither, for that matter, are men. Some horses will run pounds and pounds better in heavy going than when the going is hard—with certain horses I have known I might conscientiously substitute

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"stones" for "pounds"—while horses possess quite as many curious characteristics as human beings.

As an example of this temperamental side of the character of the thoroughbred, I can think of quite a number of cases in which mounts I have had have suddenly "chucked up the racing business" for the time being because early on in a race they have been bumped into by another horse, or interfered with in some way or another which has struck them as not being "quite playing the game." As a result, when going really well they have, of a sudden, become soured, and have dropped out of the race altogether. Still, there you are—critics on the stand cannot possibly appreciate these things, these little *contretemps*, which doubtless accounts for the fact that, as I have said, critics on the stand are not by any means infallible judges of the art of race-riding.

There are, of course, a thousand and one other reasons which, if viewed impartially, account for the difference in the running of horses. In a short article it would obviously be impossible to explain these at length, but when I say that some horses invariably "come to hand" and show their best form in the spring, while others seem to prefer the summer or autumn, as the case may be, rather than any other time of year, and that other horses can only show their best form on certain courses, left or right-handed, up-hill or down-hill, severe or easy, in light or heavy going, when ridden by a strong jockey rather than a mere boy, I think I am explaining fairly accurately exactly why, on occasions, the true artiste among jockeys may fail to come off.

Another interesting point in connection with the riding of races here occurs to me, and that is that, although races are usually run at the rate of anything from thirty-three to thirty-six miles an hour—you can work out the calculation quite simply for yourself—it is quite extraordinary how wonderfully clearly a jockey can recognize the sea of faces lining the rails. Those who have only ridden winners "on the stands" will probably imagine that in a fast-run race a racecourse crowd would appear to a jockey merely as one big blur of faces, and yet many a time, as a field has thundered up the straight, I have been able to pick out a countenance familiar to me from hundreds of others. One doesn't



**FRANK WOOTTON ON "SWYNFORD."**
"I HAVE ALWAYS FELT REAL, GENUINE AFFECTION FOR SWYNFORD, ON WHOM I WON THE ST. LEGER IN 1910."
*From a Photograph by W. A. Rouch.*



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realize that one is actually doing so, of course—but one can do it all the same.

There is still another side of a jockey's life which I think is frequently misunderstood by the general public, and that is that the average jockey merely looks upon his mounts as so many galloping machines—in other words, he is generally supposed to feel no greater affection for one horse than another.



*From a Photograph by* **FRANK WOOTTON ON "LOMOND."** *[Sport & General.*

"I SHALL ALWAYS BELIEVE I SHOULD HAVE RIDDEN MY FIRST DERBY WINNER ON LOMOND BUT FOR HIS 'GOING WRONG.'"

This, however, is the greatest of mistakes. A jockey appreciates a good mount, and feels pride in that mount equal to that of any owner who has ever lived.

For instance, I have always felt real, genuine affection for Swynford, the property of Lord Derby, on whom I won the St. Leger in 1910, and a horse which, by the way, I regard as one of the best I have ever ridden in this country. Swynford, in my opinion, was a real good horse, as game as a pebble, gifted with a brilliant turn of speed, and also a real good stayer. What more can any jockey ask from a mount than the possession of such qualities as these?

I could, too, cite the cases of many other horses which I have come to regard as real "pals." Let me name just a very few. Perola, on whom I won the Oaks in 1909, gave me a remarkably comfortable ride. Demure and Verney, on whom I won the Cesarewitch in 1907 and 1910 respectively, were also nice horses to ride, as also is Stornoway, winner of the Gimcrack Stakes last year; while I still feel genuine sympathy for Mr. E. Hulton's good horse, Lomond, on whom I shall always believe I should have ridden my first Derby winner but for his "going wrong." Still, there are just as many unfortunates in the four-legged as there are in the two-legged world—and more's the pity.

I have often been asked whether I consider that, for a boy who can do the weight and possesses the necessary qualifications

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which go to the making of a jockey, a jockey's life is one to be recommended. To this I can safely reply with an emphatic "Yes," tempered by a very big *If*. *If* he possesses the particular qualities I have mentioned in this article, *if* he is prepared at all times to exercise self-denial, *if* he will run straight, *if* he will always realize that, however much he may think he knows, there is always something fresh for him to learn, *if* he is strong enough to avoid acquiring a swollen head in times of success, *if* he will study horses much in the same way as a barrister studies the law, an actor or actress the stage, and so on and so forth, then I am emphatically of the opinion that the boy who devotes his working life—but he must begin early, very early—to acquiring the art of race-riding will never have cause to regret it. And he may also acquire more coin of the realm in this way in quite a short time than he probably would in most other professions.

But "there is much virtue in *If*."

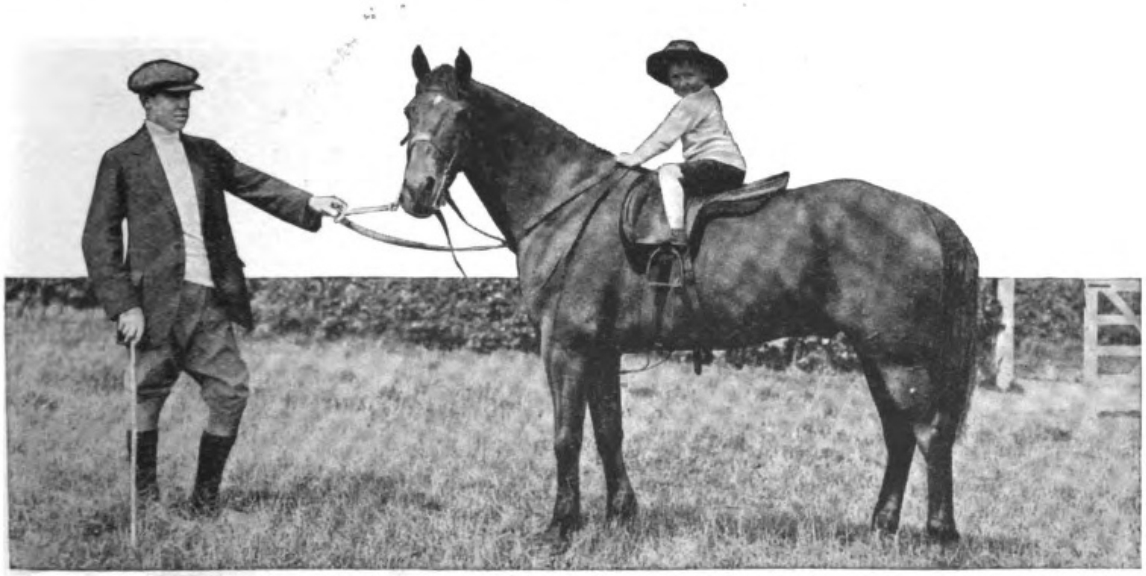
For my own part, unless Nature suddenly works a miracle—that is to say, enables me to reduce my weight comfortably by something like two stone—I am much afraid that my days in the saddle as far as race-riding is concerned are over. At the moment my weight is a few pounds over eleven stone, which fact alone accounts for my not being able to seriously consider riding again—on the racecourse—except perhaps now and again in those very rare races which will enable me to do the weight comfortably.

Still, compensations remain to me. My father, in the very near future, will give up training in England to settle down in his home, Australia. When that day arrives I am eagerly looking forward to taking over the training establishment over which he now presides, Treadwell House, Epsom, with my brother Stanley as "understudy." In the meantime, in order to get my hand in at the training business, I am taking over a dozen or so of my father's horses, which I shall train for their engagements this year.

Shall I ride over jumps? No. I have received a number of offers, and excellent offers at that, but, as I have spent practically the whole of my working life in riding on the flat, I prefer not to start on a new "job."

. I have seen it stated, by the way, that my little brother Dick, who is now four years old, will eventually become first jockey to Treadwell House. This rumour, however, like many other rumours have been in the past, is entirely without foundation. As far as the present generation of Woottons are concerned, they have said good-bye to race-riding for ever.

Still, as I have said, compensations remain to me, and, as there is no longer an opportunity left for me to ride the winner of the Derby, I shall concentrate my best efforts in the endeavour to do the next best thing—train one. And if ever I have the opportunity of doing so for one or other of the best sportsmen for whom I have ever ridden, my chief patrons, Lord Derby and Mr. E. Hulton, I have a shrewd notion that in your humble servant, Frank Wootton, you would find the proudest man in this or any other Continent.



*From a Photograph by]* FRANK WOOTTON GIVING HIS BROTHER DICKY A RIDING LESSON. *[W. A. Rouch.*

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# *The* GREAT TIMBOON

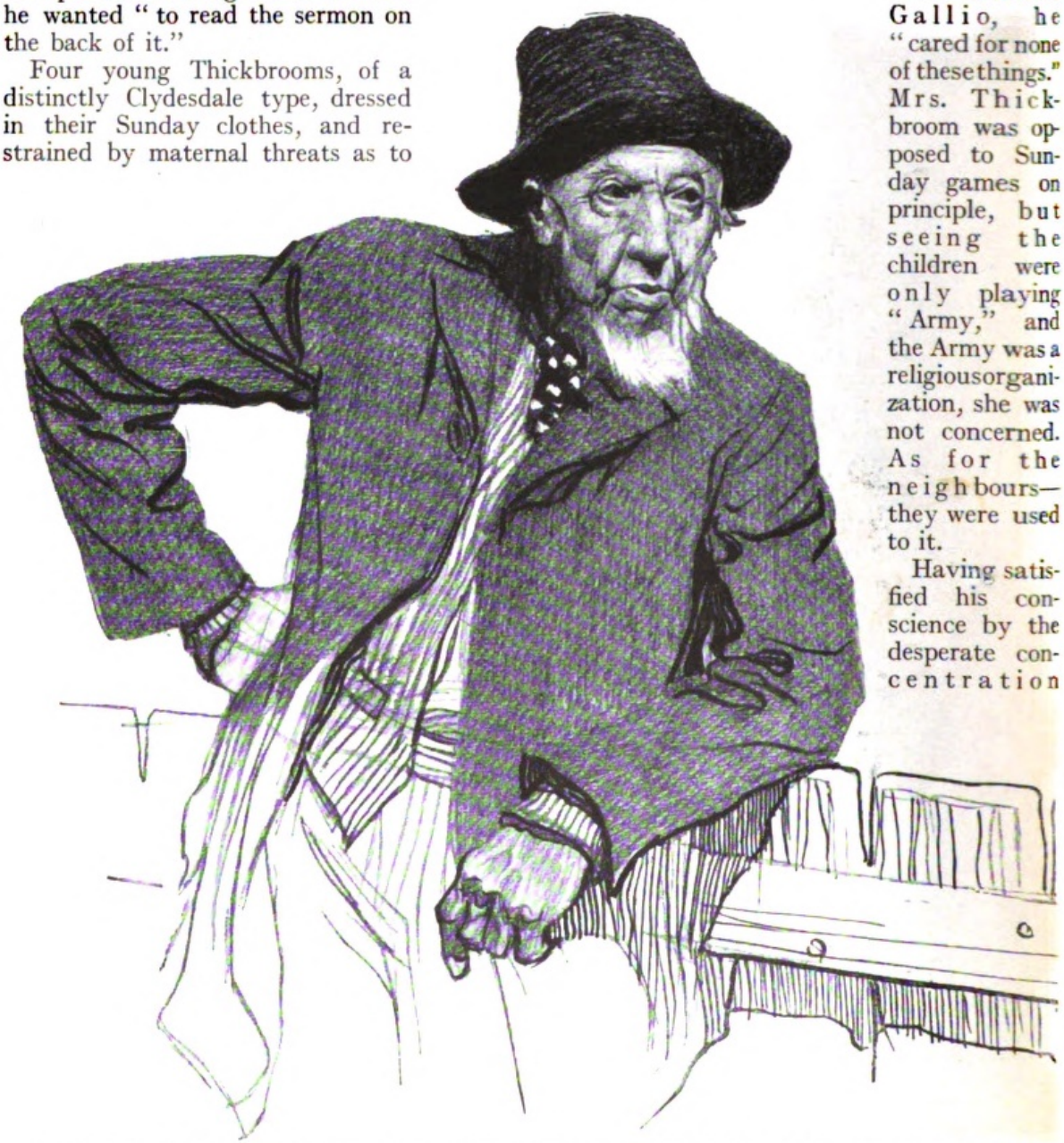
**Illustrated by**

GRANFATHER THICKBROOM sat on a kerosene-box on the sunny side of the house reading the weekly paper. It was Sunday morning, a calm, sunny morning, after a long spell of rain. There was no morning church, and Granfather, when he took the paper outside, was careful to explain to his daughter-in-law that he wanted "to read the sermon on the back of it."

Four young Thickbrooms, of a distinctly Clydesdale type, dressed in their Sunday clothes, and restrained by maternal threats as to what would happen to them if they went out into the mud, were playing a strenuous game of Salvation Army on the veranda.

Granfather Thickbroom—fortunately for himself at the present juncture—was somewhat deaf, and, notwithstanding the tramping and tin-banging, was enabled to read on but little disturbed. Mr. Thickbroom, junior, was "taking it out" in bed, but, in any case, like the immortal Gallio, he "cared for none of these things." Mrs. Thickbroom was opposed to Sunday games on principle, but seeing the children were only playing "Army," and the Army was a religious organization, she was not concerned. As for the neighbours—they were used to it.

Having satisfied his conscience by the desperate concentration



"I SAID IF IT WASN'T FOR OLD PETER, YOUR BULLDOG, BEING IN THE YARD, YOU WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO KEEP ANY WOOD NEITHER."

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# EXPLOSION.

By DONALD MACLEAN,
*Author of*
*"The Man From Curdie's River."*

## Warwick Reynolds.

necessary to read through the sermon, Granfather gave vent to a sigh of relief, and turned back abstractedly through the pages —taking here and there a mental bite (so to speak) of the forbidden fruit of worldly news.

In the midst of this doubtful occupation and the pandemonium raised by the marching "soldiers," he gradually became conscious that someone was calling him by name. Hurriedly thrusting the paper aside, Granfather rose as quickly as his stiffened limbs would permit and looked about him. The speaker being directly in front of him, leaning over the fence from the next yard, was, of course, the last object to come within the range of the aged man's vision; but, after looking in all directions save the right one, he must needs eventually look in that direction also, where he at once discovered the round eyes of "Mister" Stringy Paterson regarding him and his paper with unbounded astonishment.

"Ho, it's you, Stringy, is it?" he cried, in tones of relief, when he had assured himself as to the visitor's identity.

"Yes; it's me," Mister Paterson replied, slowly. "Any news?" he added, as a kind of afterthought.

"Hay?" Granfather inquired, putting his hand behind his ear and looking interrogatively at Stringy, with his mouth open.

"'Any news?' I said. Any good murders —or anything?"

"I wasn't reading the news," Granfather explained, coldly. "I was reading the sermon."

"I always thought they printed the sermons in the



"GRANFATHER SHOOK HIS HEAD AND SMILED. 'IT'S NOT HIM,' HE SAID, QUIETLY."

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back of the paper," Mister Paterson remarked, pointedly.

"Hay?" Granfather inquired again—not that he did not hear—he was merely sparring for time to invent a fitting answer.

"I—thought—they—printed—the sermons—in the back of the paper," Stringy shouted, "and I saw you reading in the middle of it. I s'pose you was looking to see wot the devil's been up to?"

Granfather's feet were in the toils then, and he knew it, but like the celebrated British race, of which he was an unworthy sample, he never knew when he was beaten, and with superb generalship he even now contrived to outmanœuvre Mister Paterson, and turned defeat to victory.

"When you come to my age," he said, going off at a tangent, "you won't laugh at the devil—he's got more sense than you think"; and before Mister Paterson had time to realize what was happening, Granfather had adroitly changed the subject by asking, "But wot are you doing up so early? You gen'rally sleep in till dinner-time on Sunday. Our children annoying you?"

Stringbark Paterson was not a passionate man—nor one to retain animosity for long against anybody—hence the unwonted spectacle of Granfather Thickbroom reading a weekly paper on Sunday morning had been sufficient to drive his personal wrongs from his mind; but the ancient man's question recalled them to him.

"It's them darned Duffies," he said, angrily. "I come home here Saturday night, and after tea put a candle in the bucket, and laid the bucket down by the wood-heap; and by the light of that candle I set to and cut up enough wood to last us all day Sunday, and I piled it up there in the shed to keep it dry—and this morning, when the missus got up to light the fire, there wasn't a blooming stick of it left. That's how I'm up so early. After cutting all that wood last night I had to git up and sail into it again this morning—when I should have been enjoying my hard-earned rest in bed."

"Somebody been and shook your wood?" Granfather asked, with an appalled look, for "wood-shaking," in the eyes of every respectable Timboonite, was akin to manslaughter.

"Shook it? Yes; and it's not the first time neither. I can't keep a log of wood in the yard for 'em, and if it wasn't for that bull-tarrier of yours, you'd be the same."

"Hay?" Granfather asked, thrusting his face as near to that of Mister Paterson as the fence would allow. He had missed the last two sentences owing to a demonstration of unusual power on the part of the "Army."

"I said if it wasn't for old Peter, your bull-dog, being in the yard, you wouldn't be able to keep any wood neither."

Granfather shook his head and smiled.

"It's not him," he said, quietly.

"Not him?" Mister Paterson echoed; "then I'd like to know who it is. I'll swear it ain't Jerry—nobody's frightened of him."

Jerry was the father of the young Clydesdales.

"No," Mr. Thickbroom agreed; "it ain't Jerry."

Mister Paterson was moved almost to excitement.

"Then if it's not old Peter, and it's not Jerry, who is it?" he demanded.

"Me," said Granfather, simply, gazing modestly on the ground.

"You!" Stringy almost shouted. "You! Why, wot have they got to be frightened of you for? You're eighty years old. You can't run for sour apples. You're as deaf as a beetle, and if you did happen to catch 'em wot could you do? Why, them young Duffies——"

"All the same," quoth Mr. Thickbroom, with some heat, interrupting, "it's me they're frightened of—and that's why they never shake our wood."

"Oh, well, have it your own way," answered Mister Paterson, in tones of resignation; "but still I can't make out why they should be frightened of you."

Granfather would hear no more.

"Did you never hear," he said, in low and thrilling tones, "wot I did to the Dobles when they was shaking my wood?"

Stringy admitted he had not, and added, "I never knew the Dobles shook your wood."

"Well, they did," Mr. Thickbroom affirmed, nodding. "And I let 'em go up to a certain point; then I stopped 'em; and the way I done it put the fear of me into all the law-breakers in the forest; and from that day to this I've never had another log of wood shook."

Mister Paterson was visibly impressed. "I never heard about it," he said.

"No," the aged terror responded, proudly; "and a good reason, too. They was that flambasted and bottled up that they couldn't abear to speak of it afterwards. The way I done was this. When Jerry was a boy, me and him was up in the forest cutting wood for the engine at the mill, and last thing every day we used to stack wot we cut, and measure it. Well, one morning when we got there I seen the tracks of cart-wheels on the ground,

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and about a ton of our wood was gone. Same thing happened a few nights later, and kept going on till I got sick and tired of it. So, one night as soon as tea was over, I loaded up my Winchester repeater, and went back as fast as I could to where we'd been cutting that day, and climbed up into the fork of a big tree, where I couldn't be seen. By and by, after I'd been waiting a bit, I heard the sound of a cart coming, and then who should come along but old Doble and young Doble? It was clear moonlight where the wood was stacked, and they backed the cart in and begun to load her up. Well, I waited until I made sure, and then I took aim, and let fly at the piece old Doble was lifting into the cart. The bullet knocked it clean out of his hands, and you never saw such a surprised man in your life. Him and young Doble give a yell, and then they stood looking at one another for ever so long, seemingly not knowing wot to make of it. Then they looked at the log, and seemingly couldn't make anything of that. And at last young Doble he gives a laugh like as though he didn't believe it, and picks up the log, and was just going to put it in when I let fly again and knocked it kicking. Well, then you should have seen 'em—they didn't know which way to look. After a while, however, they made up their minds to go on, and old Doble he reaches for another piece. I waited till he thought he was safe, and was just getting it in the cart, and then I sent it flying. At that old Doble jumped right in himself and grabbed the reins. Young Doble he stooped and picked up the tail-board, and was just going to throw it in the cart when I put a bullet through that, and sent it for yards. Then he give a howl and jumped in beside his father, and the pair of 'em lammed into the horse something unmerciful, and went lick for smack down the hill through the trees. And from that day to this," the terror to law-breakers concluded, "I've had no trouble. The Duffies is the Dobles' cousins, and they know all about it—and the fear of me is better in this yard than forty bulldogs."

Mister Paterson listened with tremendous interest to this graphic tale; and when it was finished spent a minute or so in deep reflection. Then he remarked:—

"Well, if you could do that out in the forest, wot's to hinder you from sitting up some night in my shed with your Winchester? I'd give anything to see you and them young Duffies——"

"No," Granfather broke in upon him; "that wouldn't do at all. Why, if I was to stay out after dark, Emmer and Jerry would have all Timboon out with lanterns looking for me. No, that wouldn't do at all; but if you really want to fix them young Duffies, I could put you up to a way of doing it."

"Well, I do want to fix 'em," Stringy replied, firmly; "and if you can tell me how, I'll jolly soon do it."

"All you've gotter do," Granfather answered, with the unction of a school-teacher imparting wisdom to a backward pupil, "is to bore a hole in a likely log, stuff it full of gunpowder, and cork it up with a bit of clay. Leave the log where they can't help picking it up, and they'll do the rest."

Stringy's gentle, round, rabbit eyes grew rounder than ever as the possibilities of this novel scheme dawned upon him.

"But, I say," he cried presently, as a possible objection began to shape in his mind, "s'pose the chimley got blown up, how would it be then?"

"Serve 'em jolly well right!" Mr. Thickbroom replied, without hesitation. "It'll learn 'em not to be shaking your wood."

"Ye-es, certainly," Mister Paterson responded, uncertainly; "but wot I was thinking of was, how would I stand in a court of law?"

A shade of something akin to impatience passed over the patriarchal countenance of Granfather Thickbroom, as he scornfully echoed Mister Paterson's words.

"Court of law! Court of law! Do you think them young Duffies would be sich ow-tray-shus fools as to summons you—when, to prove their case, they'd have to go into the dock and swear they stole your wood? Don't you believe it. They may be wood-shakers—them young Duffies—but they ain't wot you might call lame under the hat—not by no means."

Mister Paterson bowed submissively before this weight of reasoning and evident knowledge of the technicalities of the law.

"Then, by Jingo," he said, with grim determination, "I'll do it; only you have to promise me you'll never say anything about it."

"I give you my word and honour," Granfather responded, solemnly, "that I'll never breathe a word to a living soul, no matter wot happens."

People rise early in Timboon, and the sun was not yet up when Mister Paterson and Granfather Thickbroom met again at the fence. Inside their respective abodes the fires had been lit for some time, and Mrs.

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"SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH THE REPORT THE ATMOSPHERE WAS FILLED WITH DUST AND ASHES, PIECES OF BRICK, AND FLYING PLANKS."

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Paterson and Mrs. Thickbroom were busily preparing breakfast.

Mister Paterson's teeth were chattering in his head—though not with cold.

"Did you do it?" Granfather inquired.

"Yes, I did," Stringy replied, in tones of dejection, not to say remorse. "I bored a deep hole and rammed it full of blasting powder—and fixed it so as no one should know—unless they was looking for it."

"And has the log been took?"

"It has," Stringy answered, tremblingly. "I just been to see, and I wish to goodness I never heard of sich a thing. I ain't had a wink of sleep all night thinking of wot might happen. How would it be if someone was killed?" he asked, in a hoarse whisper.

"Don't you fret," Granfather replied, jauntily; "that's their look-out, not yours. I never lost any sleep—not a minute—and I got up this early so as to see the fun. I'm going to stay here and watch Duffie's house from the minute I see the smoke coming up outer the chimley, and if anyone gits their head blown off, it serves them jolly well right."

Whether or not Granfather had concluded his remarks it is not now possible to say; but he had got thus far when he was interrupted in a manner so startling and so terrible that to this day Mister Paterson shudders whenever he recalls it to mind.

The bottom part of the chimney attached to the Thickbroom mansion was composed of enormous bricks of unbaked clay, walled in with broad, upright planks of rough-hewn timber. At the top of these the chimney narrowed, and all the upper part was of wood, and directly at the conclusion of Mr. Thickbroom's pronouncement the whole of the lower part of this structure—impelled by some tremendous power within—suddenly burst asunder with a shock of such terrific and appalling nature that it rattled the windows and crockery in every house in Timboon. This was followed by a muffled roar like the discharge of heavy artillery fired in a cave close at hand.

Simultaneously with the report the atmosphere was filled with dust and ashes, pieces of brick, and flying planks. And it was one of the latter, winging its way heavily and horizontally across the yard at a low altitude, that brought Granfather's eloquence to an abrupt termination. It caught him lengthways and violently at the back of his knees, mowing him down like a swath of corn. Mister Paterson was saved by the fence.

Following immediately upon this surprising tragedy, the upper part of the chimney fell to earth with a loud crash. Then arose a series of ear-splitting screams and yells from the interior of the house; but before the horrified Stringy could scale the fence to the rescue, the back door flew open, and Mr. Thickbroom, junior, in shirt and trousers, but no boots, followed closely by Mrs. Thickbroom and the young Thickbrooms, bolted out into the yard.

The only one really hurt, however, was Granfather, who complained for a long time afterwards of pains in the back of his knees. But even Granfather was more hurt in mind than in body. For the moment he recovered sufficiently to be able to realize what had taken place, all delusions as to the plunderer of Mister Paterson's wood-yard fell from his eyes, and he regarded his son and heir with a kind of horror, and almost wished he had perished in the explosion.

All Timboon was quickly upon the scene, and the first to arrive, in a half-dressed condition, ready and eager to help, were the two young Duffies.

In response to the universal inquiry as to what had happened, the excited neighbourhood learned that Mrs. Thickbroom had arisen first, as her custom was, and, having lit the fire and put the porridge on, had returned to the bedroom for the purpose of dressing the youngest of the family. By that time Jerry also had bestirred himself, and the morning being cold had come forth and seated himself by the fire that he might finish his toilet in comfort, when the dreadful thing happened. The shock of it flung him against the wall on the opposite side of the room, and but for the fact that the charge had gone outwards through the chimney instead of backwards into the room, Jerry was convinced that nothing in the world could have saved him from being blown to "hatoms."

In the days of excitement which followed this unparalleled event the more thoughtful people in Timboon advanced many theories, all of them deeply philosophic and scientific, to account for what had taken place; but the one which obtained most credence at the time, and has since passed from the world of speculation to that of positive fact, is that eventually advanced by Jerry himself—namely, that the place was struck by a thunder-bolt from heaven.

Nevertheless, Mister Paterson notes, with a kind of chastened satisfaction, that ever since the explosion his wood-heap abides in peace, while Jerry gets all that is necessary for the Thickbroom requirements from the forest, in broad daylight.

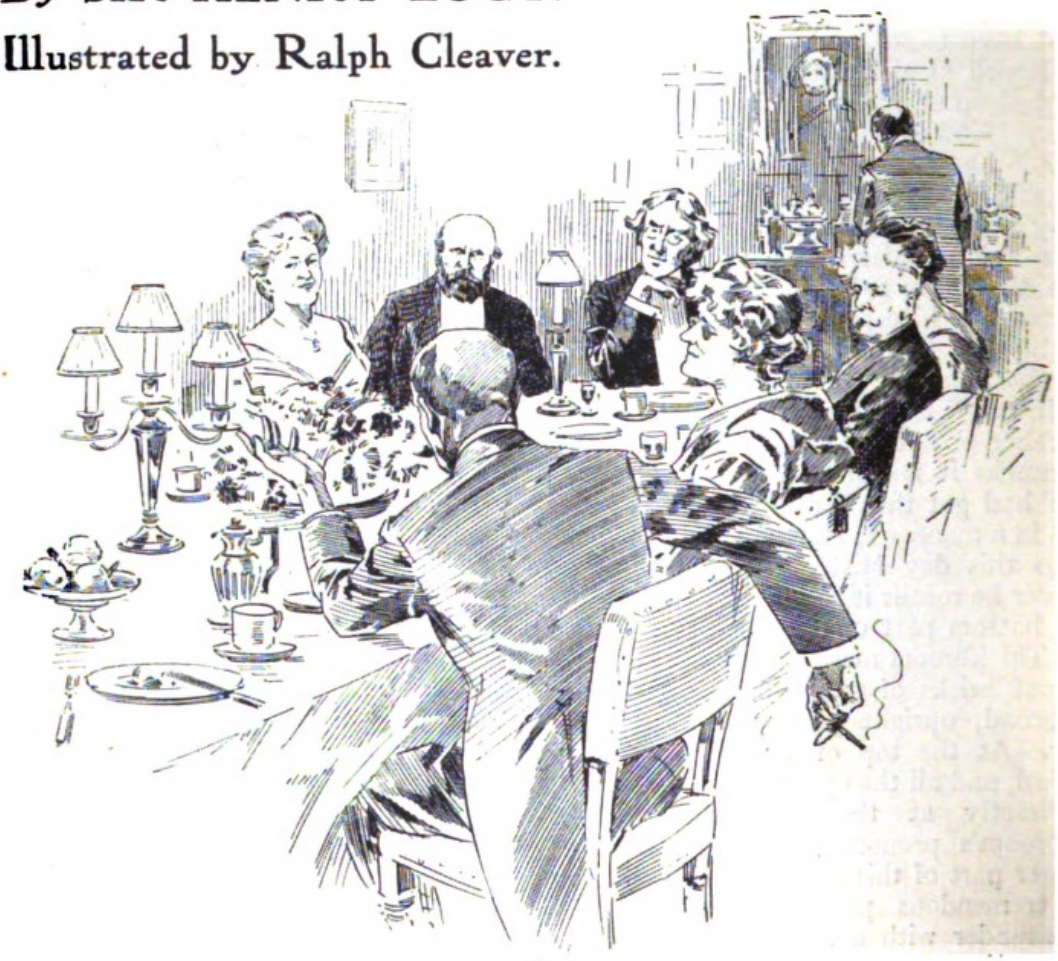


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# The Old Beefsteak Room and Thereabouts.

By SIR HENRY LUCY.

Illustrated by Ralph Cleaver.



I.

**Henry Irving — Ellen Terry — Kate Terry — Coquelin, Père et Fils — Charles Wyndham.**

WHEN, in 1878, Henry Irving established himself at the Lyceum Theatre, his quick eye, on hospitable intent ever alert, noted the possibilities of an odd corner of the building. For nearly a century it had been the local habitation of the Beefsteak Club. The Club, founded in 1735, was dissolved in 1869, and the old quarters were annexed by the proprietor of the Lyceum. Re-established, the Beefsteak flourishes to this day in more palatial quarters farther west. The old kitchen remained, and in the heyday of Irving's prosperity sent into the adjacent dining-room steaks juicy and tender enough to maintain an ancient reputation.

On a Saturday night in 1899, after the temporary withdrawal of "Robespierre," enthusiastically acclaimed by a crowded house, Irving, doffing his picturesque garb in which he had said a temporary farewell to the London public previous to his sixth

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triumphal tour in the United States, gave a supper to a few friends in the old Beefsteak Room. Ellen Terry, who in private had just added to her fascinations a pair of clouded spectacles, graced the table with her presence, and was in high spirits in spite of the sultry night and the long labours of the season.

Among the guests was her sister, Mrs. Arthur Lewis, a lady who, under this undistinguished cognomen, veils the name and fame of Kate Terry. Old playgoers say that when the stage lost this jewel it was bereft of even a greater ornament than remained with it in the person of her sister Ellen. Kate Terry, whilst still young and passing fair, in the very height of her career, married a silk-mercer, forthwith retired from the stage, and long resisted temptation to return within the fascination of the footlights. Talking at supper about a visit lately paid by the Lyceum Company to Windsor,



"I WAS WEIGHED DOWN WITH THE CONVICTION THAT IF I FAILED TO PLEASE THE QUEEN, I SHOULD BE ORDERED OFF FOR INSTANT EXECUTION."



Mrs. Lewis told me she had vivid recollection of journeying thither on a similar errand. She was at the time not quite seven years of age. The play was "King John," with Phelps as Hubert and little Miss Kate as Prince Arthur.

For the child there were two terrors scarcely less appalling than those that beset the little Prince in the room at Northampton Castle when "enter Hubert and two attendants" bearing the hot irons designed to pierce his eyes. One was Phelps, the other the Queen of England.

Kate had never before played with the great tragedian, and naturally shrank from the ordeal. She was scarcely comforted by the assurance given her in advance that he would play the part quite differently from anyone she had been accustomed to, and was advised that the only thing for her to do was to watch him carefully and follow his cue. She got along better than she expected. Phelps doubtless recognized her genius and dealt tenderly with her. But the Queen sitting there watching almost paralyzed her with fear.

"All through the piece," she said, "I was weighed down with the conviction that if

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I made a mistake, did anything wrong, or failed to please the Queen, I should be ordered off for instant execution."

That she did fairly well is proved by the fact that Kate Terry, transformed into a comely matron, with a bevy of fair daughters, long survived, testifying to her deathless interest in the stage by being present on the first night of every new piece at any of the principal theatres.

Another of Irving's guests was a quietly-mannered man who, as far as personal appearance went, did not look as if he had any history more tragic than might fall to the lot of an everyday grocer or an Oxford Street linendraper. Yet few living men—perhaps only one—had stranger or more bitter experience than the man who for twelve years was in the clutches of the Khalifa. Mr. Neufeld—for it was he—served in the Nile Campaign. He fell into the hands of the Dervishes in 1887, and was kept a prisoner at Khartoum till released on the taking of the town by Lord Kitchener in 1898. He spoke excellent English, though for twelve years he heard no other tongue than Soudanese. He thought he had forgotten German and English, but on emerging upon civilization both speedily came back to him.

I asked him what were the first English words he heard spoken in his captivity.

"It was," he said, "the Sirdar, Lord Kitchener, who, coming in to see me after the battle of Omdurman, said, 'Well, are you all right?'"

This almost touches the sublimity of Stanley's greeting to Dr. Livingstone, stumbling upon him in the solitude of Central Africa: "Dr. Livingstone, I presume?" It is eminently characteristic of the phlegmatic Englishman that, breaking in upon the tragedy of twelve years' hopeless captivity, all he said to the victim was, "Well, are you all right?"

Mr. Neufeld spoke gratefully of an officer accompanying the Sirdar—his name, strange to say, he did not know—who after his deliverance lent him his horse to conduct him to the camp. The officer had been in the recent fight, was evidently worn out with fatigue and lack of sleep, but he insisted upon the rescued captive sitting on his horse, whilst he walked in the hot sun by his side.

With a twinkle in his eye, Mr. Neufeld admitted that he particularly enjoyed Henry Irving's cuisine after his long experience of the Khalifa's fare. Morn, noon, and night, it was ever the same—a pounded sort of maize, which tasted like nothing so much as sawdust. This is the common food of people in the Soudan. Yet they thrive on it, turning out hardy workers and warriors. During his long captivity Mr. Neufeld only twice came into the presence of the Khalifa.

Talking about Gordon, he told a story which upset a long-established tradition. According to detailed accounts reaching this country, Gordon received his death-wound standing unarmed at the top of the steps leading to the palace he had appropriated as residence. Mr. Neufeld, having long and intimate companionship with natives who were either present in Khartoum at the time or heard the story from the lips of those who were, told me Gordon died sword in hand.

Irving contributed to the gaiety of the supper a story about Lawrence Barrett. One night Barrett and his old friend, Edwin Booth, met at their club in New York. Barrett, after brief greeting, bustled towards the door with every appearance of remembering a pressing engagement.

"Halloa! Where are you off to?" Booth asked.

"To a rehearsal," said Barrett.

"What's the play?"

Barrett said it was "Romeo and Juliet."

"And what part do you take?" Booth asked, in sudden access of interest.

"There is only one part for me in the play," Barrett said, drawing himself up in lofty indignation.

"Oh, ah, yes," said Booth. "I know—the Nurse."

The angered tragedian strode forth in haughty silence, and did not speak to Booth for two days.

Irving was a rare combination of a man of genius and a man of business. In preparing a play for the stage he spared no money. Of that he was lavishly free. What was even more essential to success, he did not spare himself, taking infinite pains in respect of the smallest detail. He was, for fully a quarter of a century, rewarded with phenomenal success. Bram Stoker told me that from the opening of his management to the day of his death he received from a delighted public a sum of over two millions sterling. By his fourth tour in the United States he drew into the treasury one hundred and twenty-three thousand pounds. Yet, owing to a sudden turn in the tide of fortune, he died comparatively poor.

This was largely the result of reckless generosity. Even the accumulation of

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disasters that followed on his accident on the night of the production of "Richard III." (in December, 1896) could not have affected the amount of saving possible had he been inclined to adopt the habit during the height of his financial prosperity. His first impulse ever was to give. I remember supping with him on another night in the still palmy days of the Lyceum. Seated opposite him at the narrow table of the Beefsteak Room, I made a remark about the beauty of an old Queen Anne chair he had for a moment vacated.

"Take it with you," was his swift response, and on leaving I had the greatest difficulty in preventing him having the treasure packed on the roof of the hansom cab that took me home.

The year 1894 was the high-water mark of his prosperity. Within its term he climbed the topmost hill of popularity and renown. He was undisguisedly proud of an exhibition of versatility in playing on the same night Conan Doyle's "A Story of Waterloo" and Wills's "Chapter from the Life of Don Quixote," a judiciously condensed version of a play Irving had kept in his desk for eighteen years.

An ordinary man would have been satisfied with the creation of the part of either Don Quixote or the old Waterloo veteran who drove the powder-wagon to the relief of the Guards at Hugomont, whose life, having passed its ninetieth year, flickered out in a cottage room. Irving attempted, and succeeded, in presenting these illimitably diverse characters in rapid succession. There was no doubt on the first night which was the greater favourite. The brilliant gathering of well-known people in the stalls and boxes joined with pit and gallery in rounds of enthusiastic applause of Irving's marvellously minute and perfect transformation into the nonagenarian soldier, with his pathetic childishness, his glorious past, his occasional flashes of ancient fire, after one of which the lamp finally goes out. At the supper given to some of his friends on the stage after the performance I had an opportunity of asking him which part was more to his liking. He seemed genuinely astonished that any doubt could exist on the subject.



"THE ANGERED TRAGEDIAN STRODE FORTH IN HAUGHTY SILENCE."

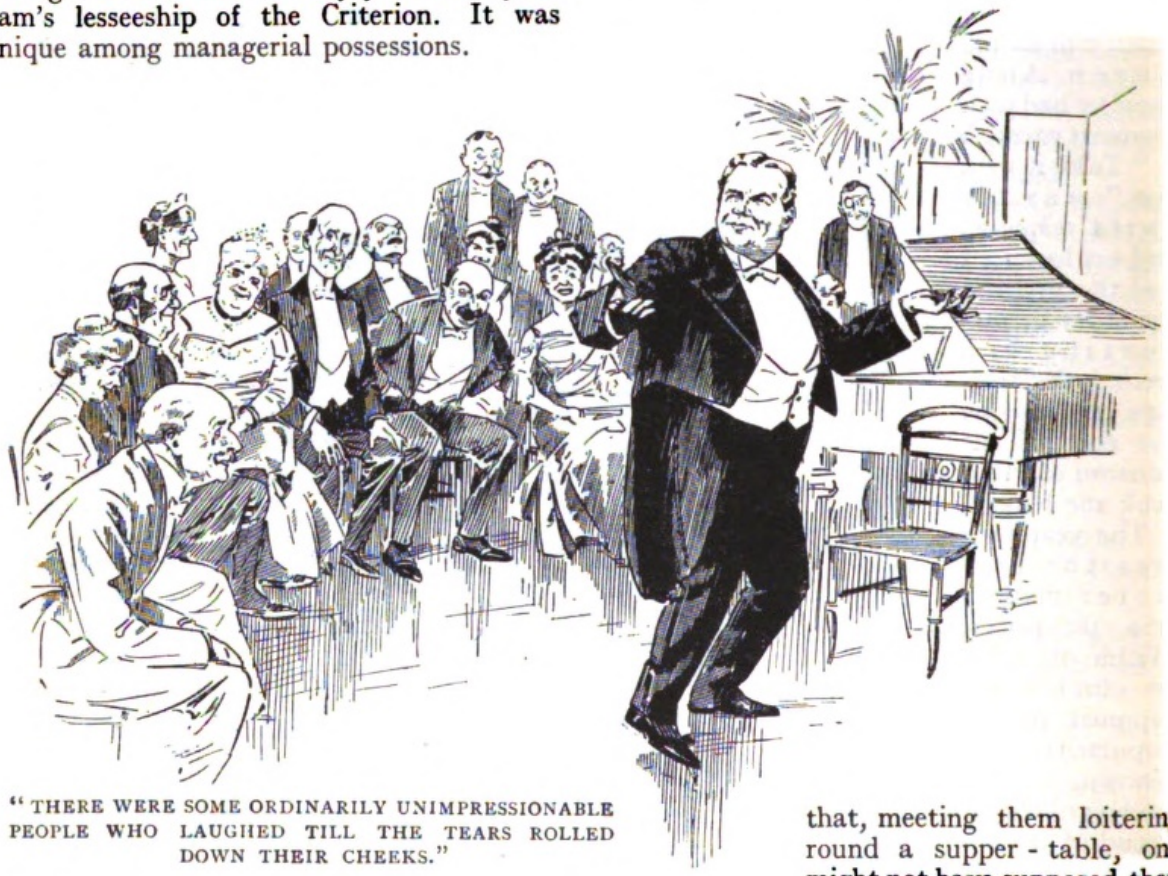
"Why, Don Quixote!" he said, his face lighting up with enthusiasm at mention of the name.

From one point of view he was unquestionably right. In appearance, in bearing, in gesture, in voice, in every action, he realized on the stage the crazy gentleman whom Cervantes invented and immortalized. None the less is "Don Quixote" impossible as a play, and none the more was Wills the man to even partially accomplish the impossible. After a brief run the curtain finally fell on "Don Quixote." Corporal Gregory Brewster, babbling of "the Duke," held the stage to the end of Irving's career.

During his active management of the Criterion Theatre Charles Wyndham also had his private supper-room, where he and a bright company of guests often heard the

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chimes at midnight. Situated some way at the back of the theatre, it was cunningly contrived in the semblance of the cabin of a yacht. So minute was the masterly production that light was admitted through portholes glassed in sea-green. Swinging lamps hung from the ceiling in case Piccadilly Circus, caught in a gust of wind, should give a sudden lurch. For sideboard there were lockers such as one finds aboard a ship. Many a merry little supper was given here during the more than twenty years of Wyndham's lesseeship of the Criterion. It was unique among managerial possessions.



"THERE WERE SOME ORDINARILY UNIMPRESSIONABLE PEOPLE WHO LAUGHED TILL THE TEARS ROLLED DOWN THEIR CHEEKS."

In later years Wyndham, taking up his residence at an hotel at Knightsbridge, entertained a good deal, having frequent Sunday-night dinners. At one of these I made the acquaintance of Coquelin *père*. He and his son were fulfilling a short engagement at one of the London theatres, which closed more brilliantly than it opened. If the great French actor had never drawn his salary for public appearances during his stay in London, he would have made a handsome thing out of his visit. A fashion suddenly developed of inviting him and his son to private houses, where, in the presence of a select company of guests, they either recited or presented famous scenes from their most popular pieces. MM. Coquelin appeared for the last time at a well-known house in Stratton Street, where some fifty ladies and gentlemen were invited to meet them — Coquelin first and supper afterwards.

Father and son were in excellent form. I am bound to say that if the son did not bear the father's name and go about under his wing there would not have been any crush to see him, or any such price paid as was forthcoming for this private entertainment. Neither *père* nor *fils* was at all like the traditional Frenchman. I am not certain that, meeting them loitering round a supper-table, one might not have supposed they were waiters. There was something in the father's countenance reminiscent of Johnnie Toole, though his facial play was much subtler.

One item in Coquelin *père's* programme was a narrative, supposed to be given by an Englishman speaking the French of Stratford-atte-Bow, of a moving tragedy in Japanese life. I never heard anything more marvellous than Coquelin's reproduction of the English accent of the French tongue. Hearing this, and watching the inimitable play of his face, there were some ordinarily unimpressionable people who laughed till the tears rolled down their cheeks.

Wyndham frequently lunched with us at Ashley Gardens. On the last occasion, just before Easter, he met the late Duke of

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Argyll, a great admirer of his stage triumphs. None at the table thought that this was the last time we should listen to the charming conversation of one of the most simple-mannered yet most capable men of his day.

One time Wyndham arrived on a certain Tuesday, having been invited for the Tuesday in the following week. The unexpected addition was awkward, leading to the crowding up of a table where every seat had been allotted. The best, however, was made of the accident, and Wyndham seated himself in happy unconsciousness that unexpectedness lent fresh charm to his company. In the course of conversation he told an interesting story of how a lady well known in London society had earlier in the year invited him to dinner, promising some pleasant company. He arrived, as he believed, in due course, and was surprised to find himself the sole guest. He concluded the rest would turn up in time. When dinner was announced, finding himself *tête-à-tête* with his hostess, he ventured to observe that he had expected to meet So-and-so.

"Yes," said the hostess, smiling, "but that was last night."

I had not intended to say anything about what was evidently an engagement-book error, but this was really too tempting.

"My dear Wyndham," I said, across the table, "you would otherwise never have known it, but I must cap your excellent story by telling you that it was next Tuesday you were expected to lunch here."

Even Wyndham blushed.

But he was not yet at the end of his resources. On the following Tuesday, the day originally appointed, he turned up again. It fortunately happened that Herbert Gladstone, one of the expected guests, detained by Ministerial business, was an absentee, and into his empty chair Wyndham cheerily dropped, hungry and unabashed.

In anticipation of one of the annual dinners of the Actors' Benevolent Society, I sent a little cheque to Wyndham, whose services on behalf of old comrades fallen by the way were through many years tireless. Not receiving an acknowledgment in due course of post, I, affecting to be concerned for the safety of the remittance, telegraphed that I should instruct my banker to stop payment. Within an hour this little ruse brought the following breathless but undated letter:—

MY DEAR LUCY,—I must first apologize for not answering your letter yesterday morning. It is better to tell you the truth. I arrived home Friday night to find your magnificent gift awaiting me. It simply but absolutely took my breath and my senses away. The money brought me little consolation, for I began to think it was a trick played upon you and myself. The address on the letter up in the corner was also Dutch to me, and drove me to think that you had left your old home.

I did not know how to meet the matter, so took the cheque to my banker's. He was also a little staggered, not only with the amount, but with the address in the corner. He took the cheque and promised me news later in the day. That news came—but no explanation as to the address—so I did not know where to write.

My dear fellow, it is the magnificence of the contribution that has been the cause of the bewilderment. I, in the name of the fund, send you the most grateful thanks. I have no proper words at my disposal to express the gratitude I feel.

Please convey to Lady Lucy, your partner, I am sure, in this great act, my thanks and my best wishes.—Yours sincerely, CHARLES WYNDHAM.

The address that puzzled Wyndham was Toby, M.P.'s—"The Kennel, Barks."

Fourteen years ago Wyndham told me he had made considerable progress with preparation of materials for an autobiography. The lives of few men have been crowded more fully with events. During the more than forty years he has lived in London as manager of a theatre he has been brought into intimate relations with well-known people of all professions. A keen observer, blessed with a retentive memory, he is also an admirable raconteur.

One story he tells throws an interesting light on his early struggles in the United States. Brought up to the medical profession, he was, from boyhood, drawn towards the stage. Going out to the United States at the time of the Civil War, he found the theatres in a bad way. He accordingly fell back on his medical training, and endeavoured to get an appointment on the Northern Army Medical Staff. Day after day he kicked his heels in the ante-room of the great man with whom such appointments were vested.

During one of his long waits a stranger entered into friendly conversation. Wyndham opened his heart, telling him all about his aspirations and the blankness of his outlook. The stranger, seating himself at the table, wrote a little note, which had the immediate effect of opening a barred door and obtaining for the young Englishman an early appointment in the field.

On looking at the signature of the open letter of introduction, he discovered that his newly-found friend was T. P. Barnum.

*(To be concluded next month.)*

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# A MAN OF MEANS

## No. IV

## The EPISODE OF The LIVE WEEKLY

By

C·H·Bovill and P·G·Wodehouse

*Illustrated by Alfred Leete*

**Roland Bleke was a young clerk in a provincial seed-merchant's office when he acquired a large fortune by most unexpected means. He is now engaged, in the following instalment of this entertaining series, in another adventure in his efforts to spend it.**

IT was with a start that Roland Bleke realized that the girl at the other end of the bench was crying. For the last few minutes, as far as his preoccupation allowed him to notice them at all, he had been attributing the subdued sniffs to a summer cold.

He was embarrassed. He blamed the fate that had led him to this particular bench, and also the economy which had caused him to select a bench instead of taking a pennyworth of green chair—an economy all the more ridiculous because his reason for sitting down at all was that he wished to give himself up to quiet deliberation on the question of what on earth he was to do with two hundred and fifty thousand pounds, to which figure his fortune had now risen.

It was an intermittent source of annoyance to him that he could not succeed entirely in shaking off his old prudent self. Here he was with wealth beyond the dreams of avarice—at any rate, of his own avarice—and yet he still kept catching himself in the act of approaching the world from the point of view of a provincial seed-merchant's second clerk. He longed to live with a gay spaciousness, but habit was occasionally too strong for him. Sometimes he would ask himself despairingly if the rules of the new life were not too hard to learn; and for some days after one of these black moments he was apt to behave like a largesse-distributing monarch gone mad. Waiters, porters, cabmen, and others who came within reach of him at such times would dream of retiring with fortunes.

The sniffs continued. Roland's discomfort increased. Chivalry had always been his weakness. In the old days, on a hundred and forty pounds a year, he had had few opportunities of indulging himself in this direction; but now it seemed to him sometimes that the whole world was crying out for assistance. When the world gets within earshot of a chivalrous young man with plenty of spare cash, it is not apt to be reticent.

Should he speak to her? He wanted to; but only a few days ago his eye had been caught by the placard of a weekly paper bearing the title of *Squibs*, on which in large letters was the legend, "Men Who Speak to Girls," and he had gathered that the accompanying article was a denunciation rather than a eulogy of these individuals. On the other hand, she was obviously in distress.

Another sniff decided him.

"I say, you know," he said.

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"'PARDON ME,' HE WENT ON, 'BUT YOU APPEAR TO BE IN TROUBLE. IS THERE ANYTHING I CAN DO FOR YOU?'"

What he had meant to say was, "Pardon me, but you appear to be in trouble. Is there anything I can do for you?" But the difference between life and the stage is that in life one's lines never come out quite right at the first performance.

The girl looked at him. She was small, and at the present moment had that air of the floweret surprised while shrinking which adds a good thirty-three per cent. to a girl's attractions. Her nose, he noted, was delicately tip-tilted. A certain pallor added to her beauty. Roland's heart executed the opening steps of a buck-and-wing dance.

"Pardon me," he went on, "but you appear to be in trouble. Is there anything I can do for you?"

She looked at him again—a keen look which seemed to get into Roland's soul and walk about it with a search-light. Then, as if satisfied by the inspection, she spoke.

"No, I don't think there is," she said, "unless you happen to be the proprietor of a weekly paper with a Woman's Page, and need an editress for it."

"I don't understand."

"Well, that's all anyone could do for me: give me back my work or give me something else of the same sort."

"Oh, have you lost your job?"

"I have. So would you mind going away, because I want to go on crying, and I do it better alone! You won't mind my turning you out, I hope, but I was here first, and there are heaps of other benches."

"No, but wait a minute. I want to hear about this. I might be able—what I mean is—think of something. Tell me all about it."

There is no doubt that the possession of two hundred and fifty thousand pounds tones down a diffident man's diffidence. Roland began to feel almost masterful.

"Why should I?"

"Why shouldn't you?"

"There's something in that," said the girl, reflectively. "After all, you might know somebody. Well, as you want to know, I have just been discharged from a paper called *Squibs*. I used to edit the Woman's Page."

"By Jove, did you write that article on 'Men Who Speak——'?"

The hard manner in which she had wrapped



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herself as in a garment vanished instantly. Her eyes softened. She even blushed.

"You don't mean to say you read it? I didn't think anyone read *Squibs*."

"Read it!" cried Roland, recklessly abandoning truth. "I should jolly well think so. I know it by heart. Do you mean to say that, after an article like that, they sacked you?"

"Oh, they didn't send me away for incompetence. It was simply because they couldn't afford to keep me on. Mr. Petheram was very nice about it."

"Who's Mr. Petheram?"

A slight twinge—it would be exaggeration to call it jealousy—disturbed Roland's enjoyment of the conversation. Somehow he did not like the idea of this girl being on speaking terms with other men.

For the first time she smiled.

"Mr. Petheram's everything. He calls himself the editor, but he's really everything except office-boy, and I expect he'll be that next week. When I started with the paper there was quite a large staff. But it got whittled down by degrees till there were only Mr. Petheram and myself. It was like the crew of the *Nancy Bell*. They got eaten one by one, till I was the only one left. And now I've gone. Mr. Petheram is doing the whole paper now."

"He must be clever."

"He's a genius."

"How is it that he can't get anything better to do?" he said.

"He has done lots of better things. He used to be at Carmelite House, but they thought he was too old."

Roland felt relieved. If this Petheram was an old man he did not so much object to her enthusiasm. He conjured up a picture of a white-haired elder with a fatherly manner.

"Oh, he's old, is he?"

"Twenty-four."

There was a brief silence. Something in the girl's expression stung Roland. She wore a rapt look, as if she were dreaming of the absent Petheram—confound him! He would show her that Petheram was not the only man worth looking rapt about. He rose.

"Would you mind giving me your address?" he said.

"Why?"

"So that I can communicate with you."

"Why?"

She spoke quietly, but there was an unpleasant sub-tinkle in her voice, as of one who had a short way with Men Who Communicated with Girls.

"In order," said Roland, carefully, "that I may offer you your former employment on *Squibs*. I am going to buy it."

After all, your man of dash and enterprise, your Napoleon, does have his moments. Without looking at her, he perceived that he had bowled her over completely. Something told him that she was staring at him open-mouthed.

Meanwhile, a voice within him was muttering anxiously, "I wonder how much this is going to cost?"

"You're going to buy *Squibs!*"

Her voice had fallen away to an awe-struck whisper.

"I am."

She gulped.

"Well, I think you're wonderful."

So did Roland.

"Where will a letter find you?" he asked.

"My name is March—Bessie March. I'm living at twenty-seven, Guilford Street."

"Twenty-seven. Thank you. Good morning. I will communicate with you in due course."

He raised his hat and walked away. He had only gone a few steps when there was a patter of feet behind him. He turned.

"I—I just wanted to thank you," she said.

"Not at all," said Roland. "Not at all."

He went on his way tingling with just triumph. Petheram? Who was Petheram? Who, in the name of goodness, was Petheram? He had put Petheram in his proper place, he rather fancied. Petheram, forsooth. Laughable!

A copy of the current number of *Squibs*, purchased at a bookstall, informed him that the offices of the paper were in Fetter Lane. It was evidence of his exalted state of mind that he proceeded thither in a cab.

There might have been space to swing a cat in the editorial sanctum of *Squibs*, but it would have been a near thing. As for the outer office, in which a vacant-faced lad of fifteen received Roland and instructed him to wait while he took his card in to Mr. Petheram, it was a mere box. Roland was afraid to expand his chest for fear of bruising it.

The boy returned to say that Mr. Petheram would see him.

Mr. Petheram was a young man with a mop of hair, spectacles, and an air of almost painful restraint, as if it were only by will-power of a high order that he kept himself from bounding about like a Dervish. He

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"ROLAND WAS SURPRISED TO SEE MR. PETHERAM SPRING TO HIS FEET AND SHAKE HIS FIST AT THE CLOSING DOOR."

was in his shirt-sleeves, and the table before him was heaped high with papers. Opposite him, evidently in the act of taking his leave, was a comfortable-looking man of middle age, with a red face and a short beard. He left as Roland entered, and Roland was surprised to see Mr. Petheram spring to his feet, shake his fist at the closing door, and kick the wall with a vehemence which brought down several inches of discoloured plaster.

"Take a seat," he said, when he had finished this performance. "What can I do for you?"

Roland had always imagined that editors in their private offices were less easily approached, and, when approached, more brusque. The fact was that Mr. Petheram, whose optimism nothing could quench, had mistaken him for a prospective advertiser.

"I want to buy the paper," said Roland. He was aware that this was an abrupt way of approaching the subject, but, after all, he *did* want to buy the paper, so why not say so?

Mr. Petheram fizzed in his chair. He glowed with excitement.

"Do you mean to tell me there's a single bookstall in London which has sold out? Great Scot! perhaps they've all sold out! How many did you try?"

"I mean buy the whole paper. Become proprietor, you know."

Roland felt that he was blushing, and hated himself for it. He ought to be carrying this thing through with an air.

Mr. Petheram looked at him blankly.

"Why?" he asked.

"Oh, I don't know," said Roland. He felt the interview was going all wrong. It lacked a stateliness which this kind of interview should have had.

"Honestly?" said Mr. Petheram. "You aren't pulling my leg?"

Roland nodded. Mr. Petheram appeared to struggle with his conscience, and finally to be worsted by it, for his next remarks were limpidly honest.

"Don't you be an ass," he said. "You don't know what you're letting yourself in for. Did you see that blighter who went out just now? Did you ever see a man in such a beastly state of robust health? Do you know who he is? That's the fellow we've got to pay five pounds a week to for life."

"Why?"

"We can't get rid of him. When the paper started, the proprietors—not the present ones—thought it would give the thing a boom if they had a football competition with a first prize of a fiver a week for life. Well, that's

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the man who won it. He's been handed down as a legacy from proprietor to proprietor, till now we've got him. Ages ago they tried to get him to compromise for a lump sum down, but he wouldn't. Said he would only spend it, and preferred to get it by the week. Well, by the time we've paid that vampire, there isn't much left out of our profits. That's why we are at present a little understaffed."

A frown clouded Mr. Petheram's brow. Roland wondered if he was thinking of Bessie March.

"I know all about that," he said.

"And you still want to buy the thing?"

"Yes."

"But what on earth for? Mind you, I ought not to be crabbing my own paper, but you seem a good chap, and I don't want to see you landed. Why are you doing it?"

"Oh, just for fun."

"Ah, now you're talking. If you can afford expensive amusements, go ahead."

He put his feet on the table and lit a short pipe. His gloomy views on the subject of *Squibs* gave way to a wave of optimism.

"You know," he said, "there's really a lot of life in the old rag yet, if it were properly run. What has hampered us has been lack of capital. We haven't been able to advertise. I'm bursting with ideas for booming the paper, only naturally you can't do it for nothing. As for editing, what I don't know about editing—but perhaps you had got somebody else in your mind?"

"No, no," said Roland, who would not have known an editor from an office-boy. The thought of interviewing prospective editors appalled him.

"Very well, then," resumed Mr. Petheram, reassured, kicking over a heap of papers to give more room for his feet. "Take it that I continue as editor. We can discuss terms later. Under the present *régime* I have been doing all the work in exchange for a happy home. I suppose you won't want to spoil the ship for a ha'porth of tar? In other words, you would sooner have a happy, well-fed editor running about the place than a broken-down wreck who might swoon from starvation?"

"But one moment," said Roland. "Are you sure that the present proprietors will want to sell?"

"Want to sell!" cried Mr. Petheram, enthusiastically. "Why, if they know you want to buy you've as much chance of getting away from them without the paper as—as—well, I can't think of anything that has such a poor chance of anything. If you aren't quick on your feet, they'll cry on your shoulder. Come along, and we'll round them up now."

He struggled into his coat and gave his hair an impatient brush with a notebook.

"There's just one other thing," said Roland. "I have been a regular reader of *Squibs* for some time, and I particularly admire the way in which the Woman's Page——"

"You mean you want to re-engage the editress? Rather. You couldn't do better. I was going to suggest it myself. Now, come along quick before you change your mind or wake up."

Within a very few days of becoming sole proprietor of *Squibs* Roland began to feel much as a man might who, a novice at the art of steering cars, should find himself at the wheel of a runaway motor. Young Mr. Petheram had spoken nothing less than the truth when he had said that he was full of ideas for booming the paper. The infusion of capital into the business acted on him like a powerful stimulant. He exuded ideas at every pore.

Roland's first notion had been to engage a staff of contributors. He was under the impression that contributors were the life-blood of a weekly journal. Mr. Petheram corrected this view. He consented to the purchase of a lurid serial story, but that was the last concession he made. Nobody could accuse Mr. Petheram of lack of energy. He was willing, even anxious, to write the whole paper himself, with the exception of the Woman's Page, now brightly conducted once more by Miss March. What he wanted Roland to concentrate himself upon was the supplying of capital for ingenious advertising schemes.

"How would it be," he asked one morning (he always began his remarks with "How would it be?"), "if we paid a man to walk down Piccadilly in white skin-tights with the word '*Squibs*' painted in red letters across his chest?"

Roland thought it would certainly not be.

"Good, sound advertising stunt," urged Mr. Petheram. "You don't like it? All right. You're the boss. Well, how would it be to have a squad of men dressed as Zulus with white shields bearing the legend '*Squibs*'? See what I mean? Have them sprinting along the Strand shouting 'Wah, wah, wah! Buy it! Buy it!' It would make people talk."

Roland emerged from these interviews with his skin crawling with modest apprehension. His was a retiring nature, and the thought of Zulus sprinting down the Strand shouting

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"ONE MORNING, ENTERING THE OFFICE UNEXPECTEDLY, ROLAND FOUND HER KISSING THE TOP OF MR. PETHERAM'S HEAD."

"Wah, wah, wah! Buy it! Buy it!" with reference to his personal property appalled him.

He was beginning now heartily to regret having bought the paper, as he generally regretted every definite step which he took. The glow of romance which had sustained him during the preliminary negotiations had faded entirely. A girl has to be possessed of unusual charm to continue to captivate B. when she makes it plain daily that her heart is the exclusive property of A.; and Roland had long since ceased to cherish any delusion that Bessie March was ever likely to feel anything but a mild liking for him. Young Mr. Petheram had obviously staked out an indisputable claim. Her attitude towards him was that of an affectionate devotee towards a high priest. One morning, entering the office unexpectedly, Roland found her kissing the top of Mr. Petheram's head; and from that moment his interest in the fortunes of *Squibs* sank to zero. It amazed him that he could ever have been idiot enough to have allowed himself to be entangled in this insane venture for the sake of an insignificant-looking bit of a girl with a snub nose and a poor complexion.

What particularly galled him was the fact that he was throwing away good cash for nothing. It was true that his capital was more than equal to the on-the-whole modest demands of the paper, but that did not alter the fact that he was wasting money. Mr. Petheram always talked buoyantly about turning the corner, but the corner always seemed just as far off.

The old idea of flight, to which he invariably had recourse in any crisis, came upon Roland with irresistible force. He packed a bag, and went to Paris. There, in the discomforts of life in a foreign country,

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he contrived for a month to forget his white elephant.

He returned by the evening train which deposits the traveller in London in time for dinner.

Strangely enough, nothing was farther from Roland's mind than his bright weekly paper, as he sat down to dine in a crowded grill-room near Piccadilly Circus. Four weeks of acute torment in a city where nobody seemed to understand the simplest English sentence had driven *Squibs* completely from his mind.

The fact that such a paper existed was brought home to him with the coffee. A note was placed upon his table by the attentive waiter.

"What's this?" he asked.

"The lady, sare," said the waiter, vaguely.

Roland looked round the room excitedly. The spirit of romance gripped him. There were many ladies present, for this particular restaurant was a favourite with artistes who were permitted to "book in" at their theatres as late as eight-thirty. None of them looked particularly self-conscious, yet one of them had sent him this quite unsolicited tribute. He tore open the envelope.

The message, written in a flowing feminine hand, was brief, and Mrs. Grundy herself could have taken no exception to it.

"*Squibs*, one penny weekly, buy it," it ran.

All the mellowing effects of a good dinner passed away from Roland. He was feverishly irritated. He paid his bill, and left the place.

A visit to a neighbouring music-hall occurred to him as a suitable sedative. Hardly had his nerves ceased to quiver sufficiently to allow him to begin to enjoy the performance, when, in the interval between two of the turns, a man rose in one of the side boxes.

"Is there a doctor in the house?"

There was a hush in the audience. All eyes were directed towards the box. A man in the stalls rose, blushing, and cleared his throat.

"My wife has fainted," continued the speaker. "She has just discovered that she has lost her copy of *Squibs*."

The audience received the statement with the bovine stolidity of an English audience in the presence of the unusual. Not so Roland. Even as the purposeful-looking chuckers-out wended their leopard-like steps towards the box, he was rushing out into the street.

As he stood cooling his indignation in the pleasant breeze which had sprung up, he was aware of a dense crowd proceeding towards him. It was headed by an individual who shone out against the drab background like a good deed in a naughty world. Nature hath framed strange fellows in her time, and this was one of the strangest that Roland's bulging eyes had ever rested upon. He was a large, stout man, comfortably clad in a suit of white linen, relieved by a scarlet "*Squibs*" across the bosom. His top-hat, at least four sizes larger than any top-hat worn out of a pantomime, flaunted the same word in letters of flame. His umbrella, which, though the weather was fine, he carried open above his head, bore the device, "One Penny Weekly."

The arrest of this person by a vigilant policeman and Roland's dive into a taxi-cab occurred simultaneously. Roland was blushing all over. His head was in a whirl. He took the evening paper handed in through the window of the cab quite mechanically, and it was only the strong exhortations of the vender which eventually induced him to pay for it. This he did with a sovereign, and the cab drove off.

He was just thinking of going to bed several hours later, when it occurred to him that he had not read his paper. He glanced at the first page The middle column was devoted to a really capitally written account of the proceedings at Bow Street consequent upon the arrest of six men who, it was alleged, had caused a crowd to collect to the disturbance of the peace by parading the Strand in the undress of Zulu warriors, shouting in unison the words, "Wah, wah, wah! Buy *Squibs!*"

Young Mr. Petheram greeted Roland with a joyous enthusiasm which the hound Argus, on the return of Ulysses, might have equalled but could scarcely have surpassed. It seemed to be Mr. Petheram's considered opinion that God was in His Heaven and all right with the world. Roland's attempts to correct this belief fell on deaf ears.

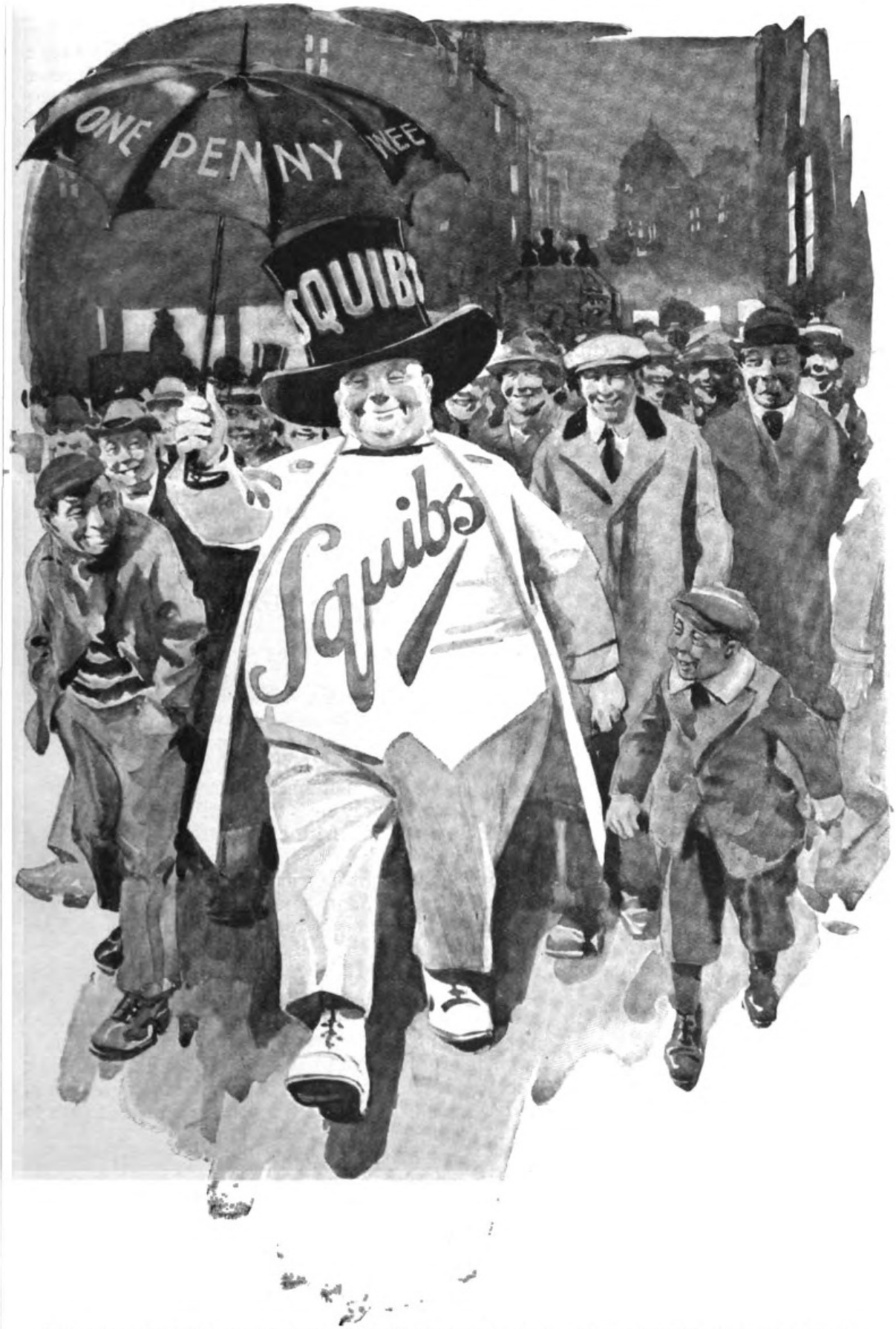
"Have I seen the advertisements?" he cried, echoing his editor's first question. "I've seen nothing else."

"There!" said Mr. Petheram, proudly.

"It can't go on."

"Yes, it can. Don't you worry. I know they're arrested as fast as we send them out, but, bless you, the supply's endless. Ever since the revue boom started and actors were expected to do six different parts in seven minutes, there are platoons of music-hall pros hanging about the Strand, ready to take on any sort of job you offer them. I have a special staff flushing the Bodegas. These fellows love it. It's meat and drink to them to be right in the public eye like that. Makes them feel ten years younger. It's wonderful the talent kicking about. Those Zulus used

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"HE WAS A LARGE, STOUT MAN, COMFORTABLY CLAD IN A SUIT OF WHITE LINEN, RELIEVED BY A SCARLET 'SQUIBS' ACROSS THE BOSOM."

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to have a steady job as the Six Brothers Biff, Society Contortionists. The revue craze killed them professionally. They cried like children when we took them on. By the way, could you put through an expenses cheque before you go? The fines mount up a bit. But don't you worry about that, either. We're coining money. I'll show you the returns in a minute. I told you we should turn the corner. Turned it! Damme, we've whizzed round it on two wheels. Have you had time to see the paper since you got back? No? Then you haven't seen our new Scandal Page—'We Just Want to Know, You Know.' It's a corker, and it's sent the circulation up like a rocket. Everybody reads *Squibs* now. I was hoping you would come back soon. I wanted to ask you about taking new offices. We're a bit above this sort of thing now."

Roland, meanwhile, was reading with horrified eyes the alleged corking scandal page. It seemed to him, without exception, the most frightful production he had ever seen. It appalled him.

"This is awful!" he moaned. "We shall have a hundred libel actions."

"Oh, no, that's all right. It's all fake stuff, though the public doesn't know it. If you stuck to real scandals you wouldn't get a par a week. A more moral set of blameless wasters than the blighters who constitute modern society you never struck. But it reads all right, doesn't it? Of course, every now and then one does hear something genuine, and then it goes in. For instance, have you heard of Percy Pook, the bookie? I have got a real ripe thing in about Percy this week—the absolute limpid truth. It will make him sit up a bit. There, just under your thumb."

Roland removed his thumb, and, having read the paragraph in question, started as if he had removed it from a snake. "But this is bound to mean a libel action!" he cried.

"Not a bit of it," said Mr. Petheram, comfortably. "You don't know Percy. I won't bore you with his life-history, but take it from me he doesn't rush into a court of law from sheer love of it. You're safe enough."

But it appeared that Mr. Pook, though coy in the matter of cleansing his scutcheon before a judge and jury, was not wholly without weapons of defence and offence. Arriving at the office next day, Roland found a scene of desolation, in the middle of which sat Jimmy, the vacant-faced office-boy.

"He's gorn," he observed, looking up as Roland entered.

"What do you mean?"

"Mr. Petheram. A couple of fellers come in and went through, and there was a uproar inside there, and presently out they come running, and I went in, and there was Mr. Petheram on the floor knocked silly, and the furniture all broke, and now 'e's gorn to 'orspital. Those fellers 'ad been putting 'im froo it proper," concluded Jimmy, with moody relish.

Roland sat down weakly. Silence reigned in the offices of *Squibs*.

It was broken by the arrival of Miss March. Her exclamation of astonishment at the sight of the wrecked room led to a repetition of Jimmy's story.

She vanished on hearing the name of the hospital to which the stricken editor had been removed, and returned an hour later with flashing eyes and a set jaw.

"Aubrey," she said—it was news to Roland that Mr. Petheram's name was Aubrey—"is very much knocked about, but he is conscious and sitting up and taking nourishment."

"That's good."

"In a spoon only."

"Ah!" said Roland.

"The doctor says he will not be out for a week. Aubrey is certain it was that horrible bookmaker's men who did it, but of course he can prove nothing. But his last words to me were, 'Slip it into Percy again this week.' He has given me one or two things to mention. I don't understand them, but Aubrey says they will make him wild."

Roland's flesh crept. The idea of making Mr. Pook any wilder than he appeared to be at present horrified him. Panic gave him strength, and he addressed Miss March, who was looking more like a modern Joan of Arc than anything else on earth, firmly.

"Miss March," he said, "I realize that this is a crisis, and that we must all do all that we can for the paper, and I am ready to do anything in reason—but I will *not* slip it into Percy. You have seen the effects of slipping it into Percy. What he or his minions will do if we repeat the process I do not care to think."

"You are afraid?"

"Yes," said Roland, simply.

Miss March turned on her heel. It was plain that she regarded him as a worm. Roland did not like being regarded as a worm, but it was infinitely better than being regarded as an interesting case by the house-surgeon of a hospital. He belonged to the school of thought which holds that it is better that people should say of you, "There he goes,"

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than that they should say, "How peaceful he looks."

Thanks to Mr. Petheram, there was a sufficient supply of material in hand to enable *Squibs* to run a fortnight on its own momentum. Roland, however, did not know this, and with a view to doing what little he could to help, he informed Miss March that he would write the Scandal Page. It must be added that the offer was due quite as much to prudence as to chivalry. Roland simply did not dare to trust her with the Scandal Page. In her present mood it was not safe. To slip it into Percy would, he felt, be with her the work of a moment.

Literary composition had never been Roland's *forte*. He stared at the white paper and chewed the pencil which should have been marring its whiteness with stinging paragraphs. No sort of idea came to him.

His brow grew damp. What sort of people —except bookmakers—did things you could write scandal about? As far as he could ascertain, nobody.

He picked up the morning paper. The name Windleband caught his eye. A kind of pleasant melancholy came over him as he read the paragraph. How long ago it seemed since he had met that genial financier. The paragraph was not particularly interesting. It gave a brief account of some large deal which Mr. Windleband was negotiating. Roland did not understand a word of it, but it gave him an idea.

Mr. Windleband's financial standing, he knew, was above suspicion. Mr. Windleband had made that clear to him during his visit. There could be no possibility of offending Mr. Windleband by a paragraph or two about the manners and customs of financiers. Phrases which his kindly host had used during his visit came back to him, and with them inspiration. Within five minutes he had compiled the following :—

WE JUST WANT TO KNOW, YOU KNOW.

*Who* is the eminent financier at present engaged upon one of his biggest deals?

*Whether* the public would not be well advised to look a little closer into it before investing their money?

*If* it is not a fact that this gentleman has bought a first-class ticket to the Argentine in case of accidents?

*Whether* he may not have to use it at any moment?

After that it was easy. Ideas came with a rush. By the end of an hour he had completed a Scandal Page of which Mr. Petheram himself might have been proud, without a suggestion of slipping it into Percy. He felt that he could go to Mr. Pook and say, "Percy, on your honour as a British bookmaker, have I slipped it into you in any way whatsoever?" And Mr. Pook would be compelled to reply, "You have not."

Miss March read the proofs of the page and sniffed. But Miss March's blood was up, and she would have sniffed at anything not directly hostile to Mr. Pook.

A week later Roland sat in the office of *Squibs*, reading a letter. It had been sent from No. 18A, Bream's Buildings, E.C., but, from Roland's point of view, it might have come direct from Heaven; for its contents, signed by Harrison, Harrison, Harrison, and Harrison, solicitors, were to the effect that a client of theirs had instructed them to approach him with a view to purchasing the paper. He would not find their client disposed to haggle over terms, so, hoped Messrs. Harrison, Harrison, Harrison, and Harrison, in the event of Roland being willing to sell, they could speedily bring matters to a satisfactory conclusion.

Any conclusion which had left him free of *Squibs* without actual pecuniary loss would have been satisfactory to Roland. He had conceived a loathing for his property which not even its steadily-increasing sales could mitigate. He was round at Messrs. Harrisons' offices as soon as a taxi could take him there.

The lawyers were for spinning the thing out with guarded remarks and cautious preambles, but Roland's methods of doing business were always rapid.

"This chap," he said, "this fellow who wants to buy *Squibs*, what'll he give?"

"That," began one of the Harrisons, ponderously, "would, of course, largely depend——"

"I'll take five thousand. Lock, stock, and barrel, including the present staff, an even five thousand. How's that?"

"Five thousand is a large——"

"Take it or leave it."

"My dear sir, you hold a pistol to our heads. However, I think that our client might consent to the sum you mention."

"Good. Well, directly I get his cheque the thing's his. By the way, who *is* your client?"

Mr. Harrison coughed. "His name," he said, "will be familiar to you. He is the eminent financier, Mr. Dermot Windleband."

[*Next month: "The Episode of the Exiled Monarch."*]

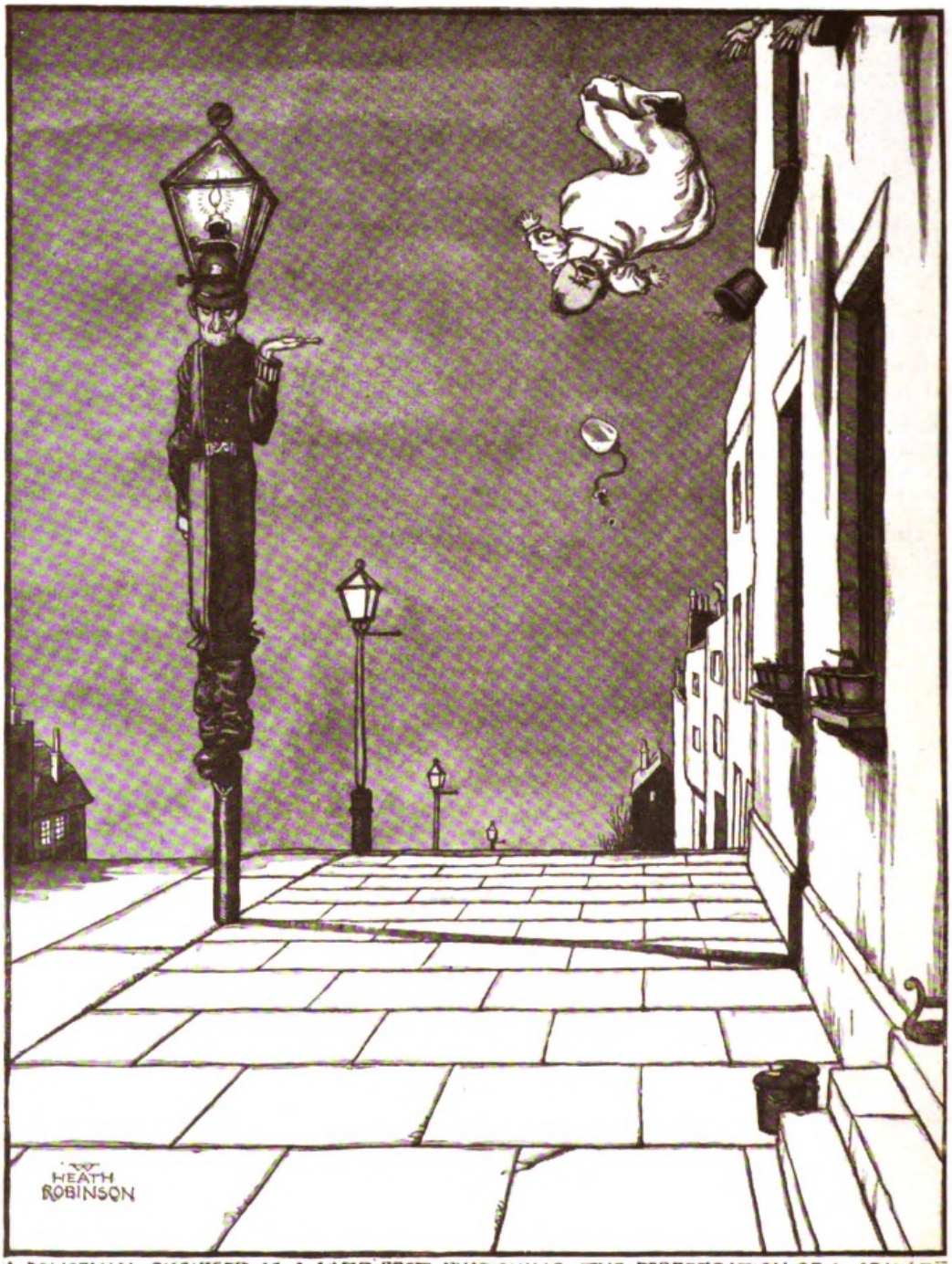


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# The Perfect Policeman.

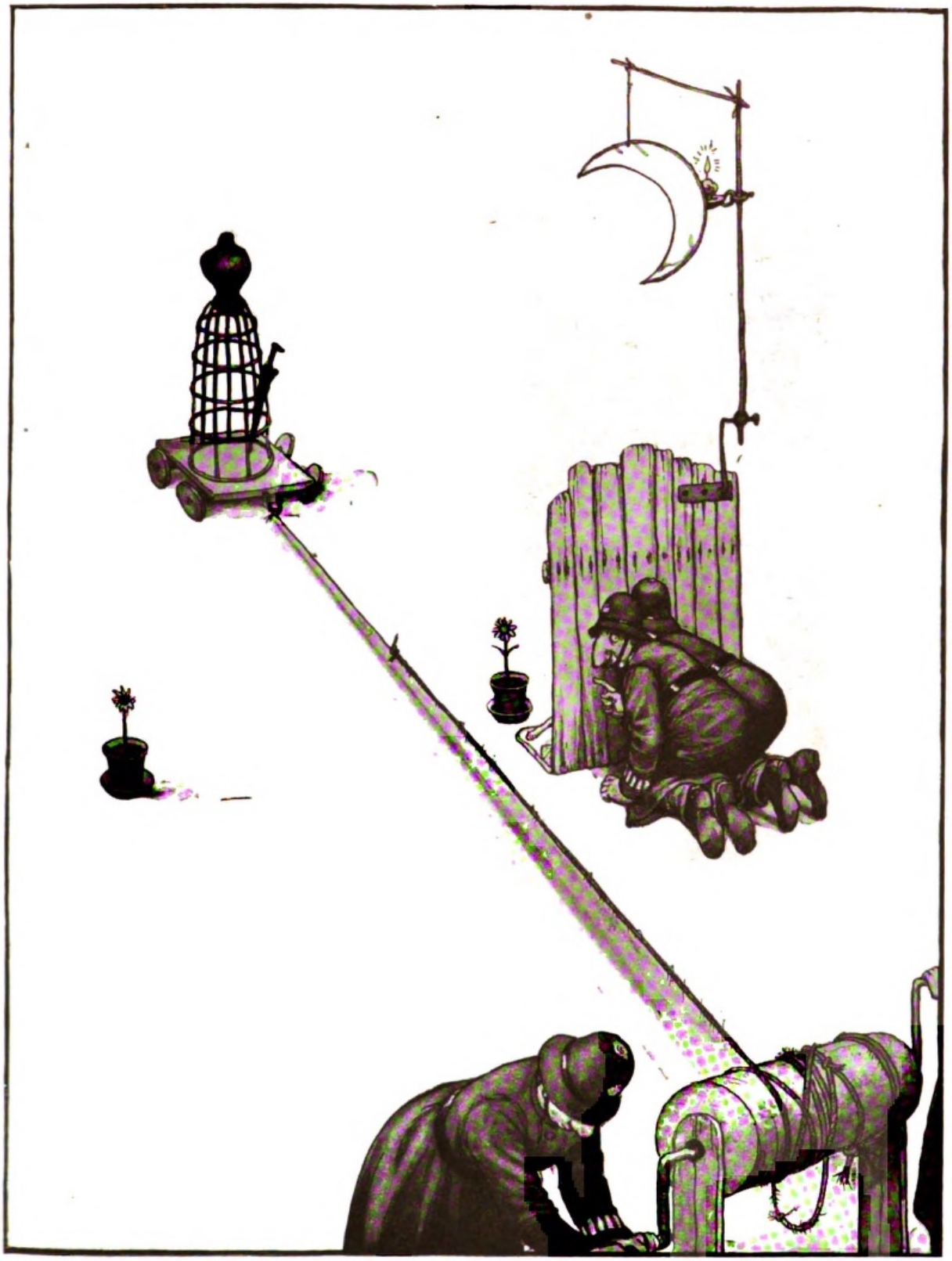
## By W. HEATH ROBINSON.

In the following pages Mr. W. Heath Robinson explains, in the whimsical style which has made his work so popular, the means of training he would adopt for the improvement of our constabulary. Fully to appreciate the ingenuity of his ideas, the drawings should be examined in all their details.




A POLICEMAN, DISGUISED AS A LAMP-POST WATCHING THE PERPETRATION OF A CRIME.

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POLICE TRAINING. PRACTISING THE MOONLIGHT ARREST OF A FEMALE CRIMINAL

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POLICE TRAINING —— LEARNING TO PURSUE A CRIMINAL.

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A HINT FROM MACBETH ——— A POLICE SQUAD DISGUISED AS HIGHGATE WOODS TRACKING A THIEF IN THE NORTH-ERN SUBURBS.

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POLICE SNARES FOR CHILD STEALERS.

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UTILISING OLD POLICEMEN -

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# Mrs Comber and the Dog

by

## Hugh Walpole

Author of "The Duchess of Wrexe," etc.

*Illustrated by CHAS PEARS*

I.

MRS. COMBER had no idea where it came from. She had been sitting high on the green, sloping cliff at Rafiel, a fishing village on the south coast of Cornwall, looking at the sea, and suddenly it came up to her. "Came" is perhaps an inaccurate word—"rolled" or "tumbled" would describe more nearly its motion, although even then one conveys no sense of its sudden, abrupt halt, a check so sharp that it seemed as though the dog must, by the force of it, be tumbled backwards.

It had come so suddenly from nowhere that Mrs. Comber, of course, expected that, in a moment, someone (its master or mistress) would turn the corner and summon it down the hill. But the minutes passed and no one came, and the sun continued to blaze out of burning blue into burning blue, and little Rafiel lay on its back down in the valley behind the hill and simmered, and the dog sat there motionless, frozen into amazement at the vision of Mrs. Comber.

Mrs. Comber knew very little about dogs, but she knew enough to be sure that there was no other dog in the world quite like this one. He might have been, were he smaller, a Yorkshire terrier, or, were he very, very much larger, a sheep-dog. He had, too, a dash of Skye. He was small but remarkably square, so square that he bore a distinct resemblance to the popular conception of a sea-captain. Hair that was turned up at the ends of it into little curls by the wind fell all about him — over his eyes, spreading into an American sharp-pointed beard under his chin, making his legs like the legs of an Eskimo, waving in frantic agitation all round his stump of a tail. His nose, like a wet black button, and his mouth, with an under-lip that went back in rather a melancholy curve, were his most certain features, but his eyes, when his hair allowed you to see them, were a beautiful melting brown.

Perhaps the most amazing thing about him was that the second half of his body was quite different from the first half, being broader and thicker, so that he seemed to have been the complete result of two divided dogs—and these two had been rather badly glued together.

He looked at Mrs. Comber and then he laughed. He gave two short, sharp barks and wagged his stump of a tail.

Mrs. Comber was large and highly coloured. Her face was stout and good-natured; her eyes appealed to you as though they said, "I know that I'm silly and stupid and scatter-brained, but do try to find something to like in me."

She liked to wear purple or bright green or red; she always looked untidy and a little dusty; she was always in a breathless hurry, hastening to do something that she had forgotten, and so forgetting something that she ought already to have done. She loved to be liked, and therefore seized at any sign of goodwill, but she always made advances too quickly, was flung back, and with tears determined that she'd never make advances to anyone again, and then made them again immediately. Her husband was stupid, conventional, self-opinionated, and an entirely self-satisfied man, who took his wife for granted and thought she was lucky to be allowed to serve his wants. He was a master at Moffatt's, a school not far from Rafiel, and there he had been during twenty years of his life, and would be in all probability for twenty

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"THEN, HIS WHOLE BODY QUIVERING, HIS LIP DREW BACK AND HE GRINNED, THE MOST PATHETIC, URGENT, WHEEDLING GRIN."

years more. He liked food and golf and bridge and arguments and putting people in their places. He despised his wife in her sentimental moments and disliked her in her careless ones, but on the whole he found her useful.

Mrs. Comber had felt lonely and just a little depressed. Certainly this fine weather was very wonderful, and it was a great deal better—oh, yes! a *great* deal better—than that miserable wet time that they had had during their first days in Rafiel, but it *did* mean that her husband disappeared every morning with his golf-clubs and was no more seen until the evening, when he was too tired to talk. No one, up at the *pension* where they were staying, appealed to her except a girl, Miss Salter, who was at the present moment occupied with a young man who was expected very shortly to propose. So, in spite of her protestations, Mrs. Comber was lonely. Up at the villa she said, "I can't tell you how delightful it is just pottering about by myself all about the little place. One gets to know the villagers so well. They are always so glad to see one, so friendly, it's quite like home. I've never enjoyed myself so much."

But the honest truth was that Mrs. Comber longed for company. As the wife of a schoolmaster she had during the greater part of the year more than enough of her fellow-creatures. One might have supposed that solitude would be pleasant for a little time. So in theory it was. During the heat and battle of term-time, to be alone seemed the most fortunate of destinies. But now in practice—now! Mrs. Comber looked at the blue sea and the green cliffs and longed for conversation, affection, the positive proof that there was someone in the world—scoundrel or vagabond, it did not matter—who was at that moment desiring her company.

Well, the dog desired it. Of that there could be no possible doubt. His brown eyes, through the tangled hair, gazed at Mrs. Comber with the utmost devotion. Then, his whole body quivering, his lip drew back and he grinned, the most pathetic, urgent, wheedling grin.

Down upon the black rocks far below, the gulls, like flakes of snow, hovered and wheeled, rose and fell. The sea broke into crisp patterns along the shore; its lazy murmur mingled with the hum of bees, behind her, amongst the honeysuckle. Round the point the Rafiel fishing-boats with their orange sails stole as though bent on some secret, nefarious business.

Mrs. Comber, who was emotional and completely at the mercy of fine weather and a coloured world, felt that her heart was full. She drew the dog towards her.

## II.

SEVEN o'clock struck suddenly down in the valley, and Mrs. Comber ceased her conversation with the dog and pulled herself together.



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She would be late, very late, for dinner. Meanwhile she had told the dog everything. She had explained to him that apparently hopeless paradox that although one was longing for peace and quiet, yet nevertheless one hated solitude. She explained to him all the disadvantages of having to do with schools most of one's life, and at the same time gave him to understand that she was not complaining, and that many poor people had much worse times, and that most of her troubles came from the difficulties of her own temperament, from her impetuosity and clumsiness and bad memory for detail.

The dog understood every word of it. He had a way of sitting with one of his back legs stretched out in a right line from his body, so that he seemed more certainly than ever to be compounded of two different dogs. His brown eyes gazed sadly out to sea, but every now and again he bent forward and licked her hand. She had now no sense, when she had finished her impetuous disclosures, of shame because she had been too garrulous, too intimate, too confiding. The dog could have listened to a great deal more.

He followed closely at her side as she walked down the hill. She had still, at the back of her brain, a confused sense that his master would suddenly appear round the corner. She would be very sorry when he was taken away from her.

He ran on in front of her, ran back, jumped upon her, showed himself in every way delighted at the afternoon's events. When he ran, he ran like a rabbit, with his stump of a tail in the air, his head down, his ears flapping, and his legs scattering.

The evening scents stole out upon the air. The little square harbour was starred and crossed with reflected lights—blue and brown and grey. The crooked streets flung voices from one corner to another and one evening star came out. Mrs. Comber climbed the opposite hill up to Sea View Villa, and still the dog was with her.

At one of the little cottages at the bottom of the hill she stopped for a moment to speak to Mr. Tregatta, known in the village by the title of "Captain." Captain Tregatta, although he was sixty-two, looked not a day more than forty. He was short and square, with the compact, buttoned look that years in the Navy give a man. He had retired now and received a small pension weekly. He lived for two things—his son and music—and he had talked a good deal to Mrs. Comber about both of these things. His son was in a hosier's in Bristol, and he had not, during the last five years, found time to come and pay his father a visit, and had quite plainly expressed his wish that his father should not come and visit him. So his father had waited, and now, as Mrs. Comber knew, the son was at last coming home.

"To-morrer," said the captain, as he gave Mrs. Comber good-evening, "to-morrer the lad's comin', bless 'is 'eart. 'Inconvenient, dad, though it is,' 'e writes to me, 'I wouldn't dissapint 'ee '—no, nor 'e wouldn't, bless 'ee."

"I'm sure I'm very glad," said Mrs. Comber a little doubtfully, wondering whether the reality of this reluctant son from a Bristol hosier's would be quite so glorious as the anticipation. She liked the little captain better than anyone in Rafiel. He had a mild blue eye, a most sentimental heart, and he was lonely.

"That's a nice little dawg," eyeing Mrs. Comber's shaggy admirer, who was sitting now with his leg out and his lip in.

"Yes," said Mrs. Comber, eagerly. "I don't know who it belongs to. It just came along and attached itself to me. Dogs are so confiding, aren't they? And, really, it's a nice little creature. Yes—well, if you hear of anyone who's lost one, Captain Tregatta. Good night."

She climbed the hill and did hope, as she went, that the son would not turn out too dreadfully disappointing—five years in a hosier's shop could make such a difference.

It was then, as the hideous front of Sea View Villa shone horribly in front of her, that she first seriously confronted the question of the dog. He, she could plainly perceive, had no question at all as to the things that she would do with him, and his confidence alone would have made it difficult for her to dismiss him. But she knew, assuredly, without any question of his attitude to her, that she could not leave him. It might be only for to-night. Probably in the morning someone would come and claim him. But to-night she must keep him.

Then, as she drew nearer Sea View Villa, she knew that she would need all her courage. Had she been of the type that perpetually accuses Fate she would have taken this moment as only another instance of the way that she was for ever driven into the ludicrous. Other human beings passed through life gathering what they desired, achieving their aims, always, to the end, preserving their dignity. But she——

Years ago, when she had first married Freddie Comber, she had told herself that, whatever happened, for his sake as well as her own, she must henceforth never be absurd.

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And since then, beyond her agency, without any action on her part, she was driven again and again into ridiculous situations. She was always being driven into them. Things that others could achieve without danger were, for her, beset with difficulties. Always the laughing audience, always that amused anticipation "that Mrs. Comber would put her foot into it."

Well, for herself, she might perhaps endure it, but Freddie did hate it so. He hated it, and he showed her that he hated it.

Now, once again, when an ordinary person could arrive with perfect security at a *pension* with a strange dog, Mrs. Comber knew that, for herself, it would be a position of danger and insecurity. Freddie liked dogs—of his own discovering—but he would hate this one. The others, with the exception of Miss Salter, would see in it "another of Mrs. Comber's funny ways." Mrs. Pentaglos, the head of Sea View Villa, would be kind and polite, but she would disapprove.

For an instant Mrs. Comber hesitated. Then remembering that long exchange of intimacies on the cliff she marched boldly forward.

## III.

She had hoped that, on this one occasion, Fortune would favour her, would permit her to creep round at the back with the dog and put him in the outhouse, then gradually, at her own time, she might explain to them his presence. But, no. How like Fortune's treatment of her! There, to her horror, she saw them all, taking their last glimpse at a magnificent sunset, sitting in the little green strip of garden.

She could not escape them. Freddie, just returned from golf, was standing, in radiant glow from the sunset, enormous, important, in the fullest of knickerbockers.

She heard him say, "You can take my opinion for what it is worth, Mrs. Cronnel. I don't pretend to be one of these brainy fellows." She'd heard him say that so often before. Mrs. Cronnel, always fat and yellow, but now under the sunset positively golden, was filling a large easy-chair and was looking up into Freddie Comber's face with rapt attention. Miss Bride and Miss Salter, two young ladies who were rivals for the hand of Mr. Salmon, the only bachelor resident at Sea View, were saying bitter things to one another in a sprightly and amiable manner.

All these people turned at the sound of Mrs. Comber's feet upon the gravel and saw her flushed, untidy, agitated, with a strange dog at her side. Mrs. Cronnel, who, for obvious reasons, hated Mrs. Comber, cried, with a shrill scream, "Oh! a dog!"

Otherwise there was silence.

Mrs. Comber, laughing nervously, came forward.

"Oh! I didn't know you'd all be here; that is, I might have guessed that you'd all be looking at the sunset—so natural—but here you all are. Yes, I've found a dog, such a dear little thing, and it *would* come all the way with me, although I did try to send it back. I *did* really. But you know what dogs are, Mrs. Cronnel." (Mrs. Cronnel, who detested dogs, obviously, from her expression declined to have any knowledge of them whatever.) "I *hadn't* the heart, I hadn't, really. Isn't he jolly? A Yorkshire, I think, only he's rather large. He's so hairy I think I shall call him Rags."

Mrs. Comber paused.

Mrs. Cronnel said, with a cruel little smile, "Rather a commonplace name for a dog, Mrs. Comber."

Mrs. Comber laughed nervously. "Oh, do you think so? Perhaps it is?"

Then there was a long pause. The dog looked at them all and understood at once that he was not likely to be very popular there. But he had, in all probability, been received doubtfully before on other occasions. He was brave; he smiled at them all, wagged his tail, went into the middle of them, pretended to see an enemy, growled, rolled on his back, finally sat up, and, with one ear back, lifted his blackberry nose towards Mr. Comber with the most amiable of interrogations.

Freddie Comber looked at him, then across at his wife. "What a cur!" he snapped, and vanished.

Mrs. Comber slowly coloured, and a little smile, intended for bravery, but too struggling and fugitive for success, came and passed.

They all saw it, and even in Mrs. Cronnel's dry heart there was sympathy. Miss Salter fell on her knees before the dog.

"You darling! You really are! Oh, Mrs. Comber, how splendid of you to find him! I know Mrs. Pentaglos won't mind. He can be kept in the stable. And he looks as good as gold. I *know* he's adorable."

To all the women, as they stood there with the dusk coming up about them, there came the thought that men were beasts, that women must band together, that no woman in the world could ever be so cruel as Mr. Comber had been. For the moment they came

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together—Miss Bride and Miss Salter, Mrs. Comber and Mrs. Cronnel.

"I knew you'd all love him," said Mrs. Comber, in an ecstasy.

IV.

FREDDIE COMBER was one of those men who say a thing by accident and then afterwards cling to what they have said as though it were the key-note of their lives. He liked dogs—he had always liked them.

Had Mrs. Cronnel found the dog, or had even his own Mrs. Comber brought it to him at a propitious moment—flushed with success at golf or billiards or argument—he would in all probability have taken the dog to himself, acclaimed it as his own find, petted and indulged it.

But his wife had arrived at a moment when he was explaining the world to sympathetic listeners, she had looked foolish and frightened—the dog had been condemned.

He had called the dog a cur in public, therefore must the dog always be a cur. His wife had been foolish about the dog in the beginning, therefore must she always be considered foolish. The dog was a nuisance, his wife was a fool—so must things remain.

He regarded Rags, therefore, with exceeding disgust, and the secret affection that he felt for him in his heart only spurred him to further obstinate exhibitions of his disgust. At any rate, the dog must be a wastrel of the very worst description, because nobody came to claim him. It was obvious to any intelligent person that his former owner had desired anxiously to be rid of him. Probably the



"I'VE FOUND A DOG, SUCH A DEAR LITTLE THING, AND IT WOULD COME

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dog had some horrible disease or infirmity. Probably he had a vicious temper and bit children and horses. Drowning was much the best thing.

"I know a bit about dogs," he would say a hundred times a day, "and if ever there was a cur——"

Secretly, in his heart, he admired it. With the other inhabitants of Sea View Villa Rags had instantly won his way.

He was a dog of the most engaging character in the world and of an amazing intuition. He realized, for instance, that what Mrs. Cronnel liked was for people to be deferential to her, to listen, and to admire. He therefore lay at her feet and looked up at her golden locks with the burning eyes of a devout adorer. He never practised upon her his humour, of which he had a vast store. She did not understand humour. He kept his humour for Miss Salter, in whom it lay dormant, waiting for encouragement. Miss Salter had been too anxiously engaged in landing Mr. Salmon to see anything in a very humorous light, but Rags restored to her the funny side of things and was never serious with her for a moment.



ALL THE WAY WITH ME, ALTHOUGH I DID TRY TO SEND IT BACK."

To Mrs. Pentaglos he paid the deference that is due to the head of an establishment, to one who may dismiss you in an instant into the outhouse if she so pleases. He was always very staid and respectable to Mrs. Pentaglos.

But it was to Mrs. Comber only that he gave his heart.

The two of them discovered during the weeks that they were together a thousand things that they had in common. They were really very alike in many ways, except that the dog had far more tact, adapted himself

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much more swiftly to the atmosphere about him. Mrs. Comber herself perceived this. She saw that the dog at Sea View Villa was a very different dog from the dog down in Rafiel. At the villa he was ordinary, amusing, on the surface. He did little tricks; he played in an amiable manner on the grass; he allowed himself to be petted by Miss Salter or Mrs. Pentaglos. Down in the narrow little streets of the village he was a dog of importance and also a dog of mysterious perceptions and intuitions. Mrs. Comber felt that, with the dog at her side, she was more at home amongst those cobbles, bending roofs, sudden glimpses of blue water, and clustered fishing-boats than she ever was alone. Rags knew every inhabitant; he selected the good from the bad, the worthy from the unworthy; he was treated with a deference by the other dogs of the place that was remarkable indeed, for the dogs of Rafiel were a wild and savage race.

To Mrs. Comber the effect of it all was astonishing—it was as though the dog were, through all these weeks, explaining the place to her. She felt it—the mysterious, subtle life of it—so poignantly that the knowledge that in another week or two she must be uprooted from it all and go back to her commonplace, workaday Moffatt's—little boys, mutton underdone, Freddie overdone—seemed to her, through these glorious hours, an incredible disaster.

She couldn't go back—she couldn't go back. Then, coming to herself, she laughed. Had she not lived that life for all these past years? Could one always expect holiday? Then also, perhaps, if the dog had so lightened this place for her he would also lighten Moffatt's in the same way. She must take him back—she *must* take him back. Would Freddie allow it? He *must* allow it. This time she would have her way.

Of all the Rafiel natives Rags liked best Captain Tregatta. The little man had an affection for all animals, but perhaps it was because he represented more truly than any other inhabitant the Rafiel spirit that Rags liked him so much. They had always, when they were together, an air of the most complete understanding. Captain Tregatta did not find it necessary to speak to Rags as he would to an ordinary dog. Words were not needed.

Mrs. Comber, indeed, almost resented a feeling that she had when she was with them both that she was "out of it."

Rags did not like young Tregatta from Bristol. He would go nowhere near him. He would neither bark nor smile, wag nor quiver. He cut him dead.

Mrs. Comber did not like the young man either. He was thin, with lank black hair, watery eyes, and a pallid cheek. His ears stood out from his head like wings. He patronized and sneered at his father. He always "washed his hands" as he came towards Mrs. Comber, and obviously found it very difficult to refrain from saying, "And what can I do for you to-day, madam?"

They stood, all four, outside Captain Tregatta's cottage. Young Tregatta said:—

"Well, it 'as been a fine day, ma'am."

"Yes," said Mrs. Comber, who was always at her most voluble when she was in company that she disliked. "It has—really wonderful; so much colour and sun. I——"

"My boy's had a fine outing to-day, haven't yer, John? We went and picnicked up along to Durotter, us and the Simpsons and Mrs.——"

"All right, father," the young man interrupted. "Stow it. Stupid day, *I* call it."

He caught Rags's eye. Rags was regarding him with a cold and haughty malevolence. He bent down and snapped his fingers. "*Goo*' dog—*goo*' doggie! Come along, then."

Rags said nothing, but continued to stare. Mrs. Comber wished them good night and passed up the hill. How she disliked the young man! The captain had a wistful look; she was sure that the son had been a great disappointment. *What* a horrid mess towns could make of a man!

## V.

And now was she horribly driven in upon her climax. Never in all her married life before had she so eagerly desired a request to be granted by Freddie. Never before had she faced the approaching moment of demand with such sinkings of the heart. They had only another three days now before they must return to Moffatt's, and with every instant of the swiftly-vanishing time the spell of Rafiel increased. Could she take Rags back with her to her daily life, then she would seem to be taking with her some of the adorable things that belonged to Rafiel. He would remind her of some of the most precious moments of her life. But, indeed, of himself now he had contrived to squeeze himself into her heart. Whatever part she might play to herself, God knew that for many years now that heart had been empty. But Rags had wanted it and had taken it.

She watched Freddie's every movement now to give her a clue to his probable answer.

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"OF COURSE, MRS. COMBER CHOSE THIS UNPROPITIOUS MOMENT FOR HER PETITION."

Golf had been well with him during these last days; he was in a good temper. Had Mrs. Comber been able to hide her feelings, had she managed to surprise him suddenly with her request, at the last moment, on the eve of departure, she might have won. But she was no diplomatist. She showed him by her fluttering agitation that there was something that she wanted to ask him, and she showed him that she was afraid, already, lest he should refuse. That determined him at once. He *would* refuse. These little opportunities of displaying his authority were of great value. Every husband ought to refuse his wife at least once a month. He would certainly refuse.

The moment came. It was the last night but one of their holiday, and Freddie was undoing his collar before the looking-glass. The head of the stud had allowed itself to be bent and the collar refused to move.

Of course, Mrs. Comber chose this unpro-

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pitious moment for her petition. It was odd that she should feel seriously about it, but her throat was quite dry and her heart was beating furiously.

"Freddie!"

"Yes? Con-found it!"

"Freddie!"

"Well?"

"I wonder—I've been thinking—it's occurred to me——"

The stud broke, the collar was off, but what was one going to do in the morning? There was no other stud with a large enough head, and on the very day when there would be so much to see to——

"Hang it! Well?"

"I'm so sorry, dear. Perhaps I'll be able to find another. What I was going to say, to ask you, was whether—if you wouldn't very much mind—whether—he wouldn't be in the way, really no trouble at all, and it would make such a difference to me—and I think you'd like him after a time; it would be so nice for the boys too, and there *is* that kennel——"

"What *are* you talking about?"

He had turned and faced her, his cheeks still flushed with the exertion of the stud.

"Well"—Mrs. Comber's voice trembled a little—"it's only Rags. I thought, if you didn't dreadfully mind, if I might—if we might—take him back with us to Moffatt's; it would make *such* a difference to me. I've got to love this place so, you know, and you'll think it very silly of me, but if I had Rags with me at Moffatt's—well, I know you'll think it just like my usual silliness, but I should feel as though I had taken a bit of this place with me."

Freddie had said no word, only stood there, staring at her, and fingering, absent-mindedly, his stud. His face flushed slowly. Her allusion to the place had suddenly surprised some curious feeling, right down deep in him, that he too had loved this Rafiel, had had the best of days here, would be immensely sorry to leave it. And this sudden feeling angered him. What was he doing with feelings of that kind? He was quite ashamed, and, resenting his shame, laid the discomfort of it to his wife's charge, and beyond her to the dog. The dog! The mongrel!

His wife wanted the dog at Moffatt's. She was terrified lest he should refuse. He was master. He was a man. No more of this miserable sentiment for him. He would show her.

"Once for all," he said, glowering at her, "you can put that out of your mind. I've hated the dog from the first; it's a beastly mongrel, and the sooner it's drowned the better."

"But, Freddie——"



"SHE GAVE HIM ONE HUG AND THRUST HIM INTO THE CAPTAIN'S HANDS."

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"Not another word will I utter. I'm a man who means what he says."

"Please just listen. He——"

"No more. I've got to get undressed. You must get rid of the dog."

She saw that it was final—that, and how much else? For, as he stood there, denying her this simple thing, as he looked at her so angrily, so cruelly, she knew, once and for all, that all her love for him was gone, had been gone indeed for many years past. She would, in the future, care for him in a protecting, motherly way; she would always be a good wife to him, but no more passion, no more colour, no more poetry.

She turned away and lay by his side that night as though he were suddenly a stranger. In the morning it was almost more than she could bear, the joy that Rags, coming to meet her, flung upon her. He curved round until his tail was nearly in his mouth; he bared his teeth; his stump of a tail, with hair branching out of it on every side until it looked like a Christmas-tree, almost wagged itself from his body. It was very early, before breakfast. Down the hill they went into the little village, all sparkling with morning freshness, the little quay reeking with fish, the cobbles glittering with silver scales.

She turned the corner and came out on to the path that runs above the little harbour. The boats, blue and green, lay in rows and, beyond and above them, the little white cottages stole up the hill into all the misty brightness of a summer morning. A haze was over the sea, so that it came quite suddenly, out of nowhere, white and blue on to the rocks.

The abandon and reality of the beauty of it all came up to Mrs. Comber, but she seemed to have no place for it. The future of her life, how dreary, how purposeless! Not even Rags to comfort her! For the first time since her marriage she rebelled—hotly, fiercely rebelled. Why should she not leave Freddie? Why should she be the only one in the world to do without things? Why *need* she suffer so? It was the hardest, sharpest, cruellest moment of her life.

Little Captain Tregatta turned the corner. Rags ran forward to meet him, jumped upon him, licked his hand. But Captain Tregatta's face was sad, his shoulders drooped, he looked old.

"Good marnin', ma'am."

"Good morning," said Mrs. Comber.

"Lovely day. Yes, indeed, if you're in tune for it; but there's nothing like lovely weather for making you melancholy if you're out of sorts."

His distress touched her at once.

"I'm sorry if something's the matter," she said.

"Oh! it's silly. Only my boy. 'E goes back to Bristol to-day, and 'e's glad to go. Yes, 'e is—I knaws it. And 'e'll never come back, I knaw that, too. All this time I've been 'appy thinking that 'e cared for me—maybe 'e was a bit busy, but 'e cared all the same—and now I knaws 'e doesn't—I knaws it; and now all the days will be without somethin', always. It's a long time to be waitin', doing nothing, thinking of nothing."

Rags, with his back legs before his front ones, sat hunched up, looking at the sea.

As she felt the glory of the morning the idea came to her—it flashed upon her.

"Captain Tregatta," she said, hurriedly, "I'm going away to-morrow—I can't take the dog with me. It wouldn't do in a school, you know. Would you look after him for me? Keep him here with you so that he'll be here when I come back next summer. I've loved Rafiel so, and I feel that if I knew you were both here together I would feel as though I'd got a link in the place—both of you together here."

"I will, ma'am," he said. "Certainly I will. 'E'll be 'ere for yer when yer come back to us, as I hope you will." Then, with a little sigh of satisfaction, "Yes. That's of it."

Mrs. Comber thanked him. She waited, tried to say more, but failed.

They all three looked out to sea. Cries and bells came up to them from the village. Suddenly Mrs. Comber, very red in the face, caught Rags's body in her arms, gave him one hug, and then thrust him into the captain's hands.

"There—take him—take him. You two together will be splendid to think of. Good-bye—good-bye. I'm feeling too silly for words. Good-bye—good-bye—good-bye."

She went, almost running, down into the flashing village, past the fish, the smells, the gossip, the cobbles—up the hill to Sea View Villa.

She did not turn or stay, but in her heart there was that picture of the dog and the man—both of them wanting her to come back.

She had staked her claim in Rafiel after all.



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# "TALL STORIES"

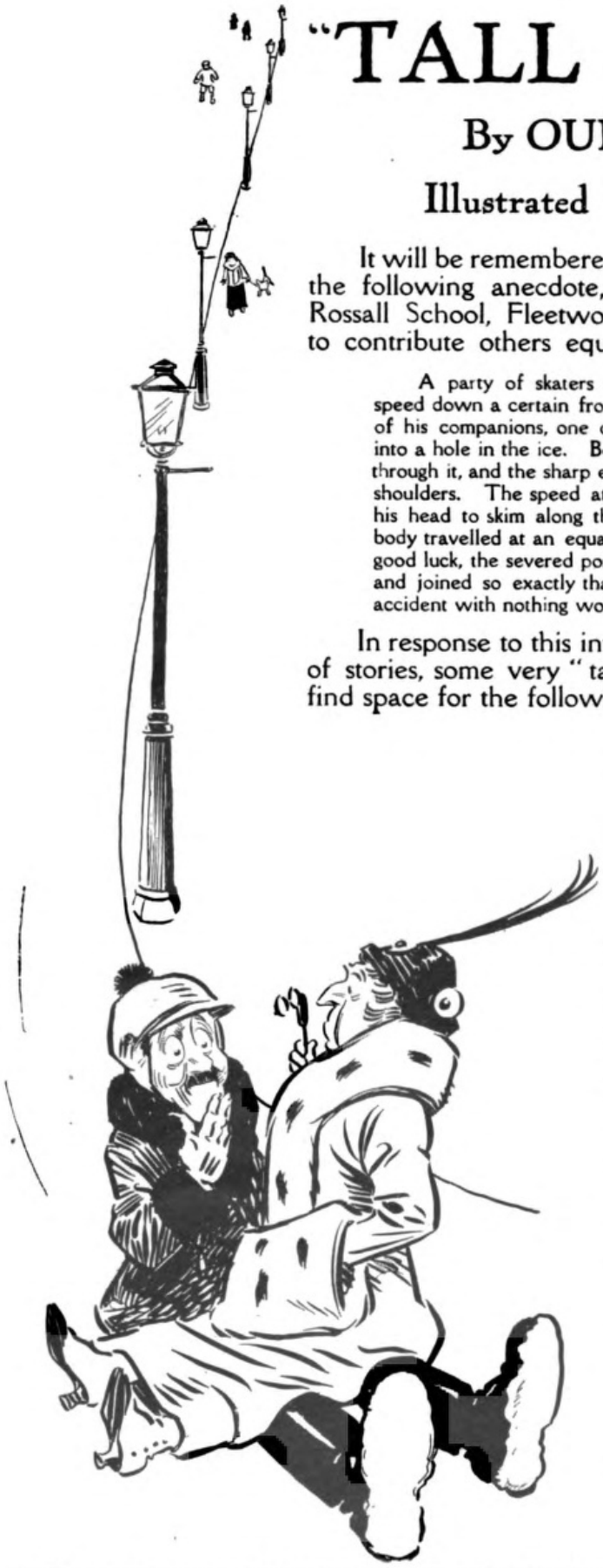
## By OUR READERS.

### Illustrated by Alfred Leete.

It will be remembered that in a recent issue we published the following anecdote, sent to us by Mr. J. P. Evans, Rossall School, Fleetwood, Lancs, and asked our readers to contribute others equally amusing:—

> A party of skaters were once progressing at considerable speed down a certain frozen river in Canada when, to the horror of his companions, one of the party was seen to skate straight into a hole in the ice. Before he could stop himself he had fallen through it, and the sharp edge of the ice cut his head clean off his shoulders. The speed at which he was going, however, caused his head to skim along the top of the ice, while the rest of his body travelled at an equal speed beneath it, until, by a stroke of good luck, the severed portions met at another hole farther down, and joined so exactly that the unfortunate man came out of his accident with nothing worse than a severe cold.

In response to this invitation we have received hundreds of stories, some very "tall" indeed, of which we can only find space for the following selection.



"I BEG YOUR PARDON, MADAM; YOU MUST GET OFF HERE. I DON'T GO ANY FARTHER."

WHILE in the Arctic regions I had wandered with my gun some distance from the ship when I suddenly perceived a Polar bear approaching me with evident intentions. I felt in my pouch for a cartridge. I had used my last! The sweat stood on my brow, when a bright idea occurred to me. I loaded my gun with powder, swept my hand across my brow, and the perspiration came off in little lumps of ice. This I rammed down the barrel, took aim, and fired. The explosion melted the ice in the gun and it emerged from the barrel in the form of water; but so cold was the atmosphere that it immediately froze to a solid lump of ice, which struck the bear on the forehead, and he died—from water on the brain.

Mr. A. L. POUND, Shenley, Shepherd's Hill, N.

A gentleman was descending the ice-covered surface of a steep street in Toronto when his feet went from under him, and he slid down in a sitting posture. He had not gone more than a few yards in this position when his legs came in contact with a

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lady who was crossing the street, causing her to sit down hurriedly on him. They proceeded thus together at an increasing speed, and shot out on to the square below, when the gentleman, coming to rest, said: "I beg your pardon, madam; you must get off here. I don't go any farther!"

Mr. L. LAMBART, Marsh Court, Sherborne, Dorset.

A lady and gentleman took seats in a train at York, express for Newcastle, and as soon as the train got out of the station the lady unbuttoned her travelling coat and brought out a tiny dog, which she calmly placed on her knee, where it sat and growled at the gentleman opposite. Whereupon, evidently to calm his nerves, he produced a pipe and began to smoke. "Oh, I object to smoking," said the lady. "And I object to dogs," retorted the gentleman, and went on smoking.

This was evidently too much for the lady's patience, for she suddenly leaned forward, snatched the pipe from his mouth, and threw it out of the window, and in a second he had also leaned forward and the dog on her knee disappeared out of the window after the pipe. But guess of their mutual amazement when the train got into Newcastle Central Station to find the little dog sitting patiently waiting with the pipe in its mouth.

Mrs. STOCKMAN, 91, Holly Avenue, Jesmond, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

A farmer was once in his fields, getting in his hay, when he lost his new keyless watch, and considerable search was made to find it, but without success. Five years later one of his cows was taken ill and died, and on opening it the watch was found in its stomach, still going, and had not lost a minute; the movement of its stomach having kept it wound up.

Mr. W. H. MORRIS, 35, Wilmot Street, Derby.

The following most remarkable coincidence was related by an old lady, who said that in her father's house was an ancient clock which had been in the family for many years. Being old, it would not keep time correctly, so it was never wound up, but stood at the head of the stairs. Now, whenever there was to be a death in the family this clock always struck once, at midnight. The lady said it struck when her grandfather died, and it was also heard at the death of several brothers, one of whom was in a foreign land. I told the old lady that it was not an uncommon thing for a clock to strike at a death, and that it was merely a coincidence, for they did occasionally strike out of time. She admitted all that, but said that the remarkable thing about this clock striking was that it had no bell in it to strike.

Mr. H. C. EALES, 1c, Sweetbriar Road, Leicester.

A friend of mine is the proud possessor of a very intelligent dog, which often accompanies his master when the latter walks abroad. One day lately, however, Fido seemed unwilling to go for the usual run. His master's bicycle happened to be standing in the hall at the time, and—will your readers believe it?—the intelligent creature went straight up and laid a paw on each of the wheels in turn to indicate that he was *two tyred* to accompany his master!

Mr. R. POLLOCK, St. Theodore, Victoria Villas, Blackrock, co. Antrim, Ireland.



"'NOW SHAKE YOURSELF,' BADE THE ARMOURER."

There was once an armourer celebrated for his skill in sharpening swords, to whom a knight sent his sword by his squire to have the keenest possible edge put upon it. After sharpening it, the armourer cut through a fleece of wool. "Not sharp enough," said the squire. Again the armourer sharpened and laid a fleece upon the edge of the blade—it immediately fell in two. "Not sharp enough yet," said the squire. Again the armourer sharpened it and placed it lightly on the squire's head. "Did you feel anything?" he asked. "Rather as if a drop of water ran down my back," said the squire. "Now shake yourself," bade the

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"THE DOCTORS RUSHED UP TO REPLACE THE PIECES, BUT IN DOING SO THEY MADE THE FATAL MISTAKE OF PUTTING THE TOE ON THE ARTIST'S FACE AND HIS NOSE WHERE THE TOE SHOULD HAVE BEEN."

armourer. The squire did so, and fell to the ground in halves.

Mr. E. LYNCH-STAUNTON, 15, Norton Road, Hove, Sussex.

Two gentlemen of French descent, whose names I have promised not to disclose—but, anyhow, they were in the journalistic profession, one being a sub-editor of an evening paper published in Paris, and the other an artist for a rival publication—had a quarrel over some trivial matter, and, as is quite the custom in France, they finally decided to settle the dispute by means of a duel with swords. At last the eventful day arrived, and the combatants, along with their seconds, referee, time-keeper, doctors, and, last but not least, a cinematograph operator, had arrived at the scene of action. The combatants faced each other with grim determination, both being confident of victory. After much parrying the sub-editor managed to get in an overwhelming cut which severed the artist's nose. The wounded man dropped his sword with a groan, but in falling it had the misfortune to fall across the big toe of his right foot, cutting it clean off. After this interesting state of affairs he was rendered *hors de combat*. The doctors rushed up to replace the pieces, but in doing so they made the fatal mistake of putting the toe on the artist's face and his nose where the toe should have been, and ever since the accident, when the unfortunate fellow has wanted to sneeze, he has been obliged to take off his boot.

Mr. JOSEPH HATTERSLEY, 31, Holmes Street, Beech Street, Hull.

Having assembled your company, you impressively relate how a man fell into the hands of pirates, or brigands, or some other bloodthirsty villains, who, *after tying his hands behind his back*, chopped off his head. Forthwith, with admirable presence of mind, the victim picked up his still warm head and stuck it on his shoulders again, whereupon his would-be murderers fled in mortal terror. At this stage one of your hearers is sure to remark: "Ah, but you said the man's hands were tied behind his back, so he could not have picked up his head," to which you calmly reply: "He picked it up with his teeth!"

Mr. Geo. A. VANN, 27, Ladysmith Avenue, Sheffield.



"HE STRUCK A TREE AND WAS SPLIT THROUGH FROM THE NOSE TO THE TAIL."

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A man with his favourite dog was hunting in an American forest of tall, slim spruce when he shot a deer, and the dog at once gave chase, running at such speed that he struck a tree and was split straight through from nose to tail. The man rushed up in despair and, catching up the two pieces of dog, clapped them together, but in his haste got two feet up and two feet down. However, the dog was even better than before, for when he got tired of running on two feet he could turn over and run on the other two.

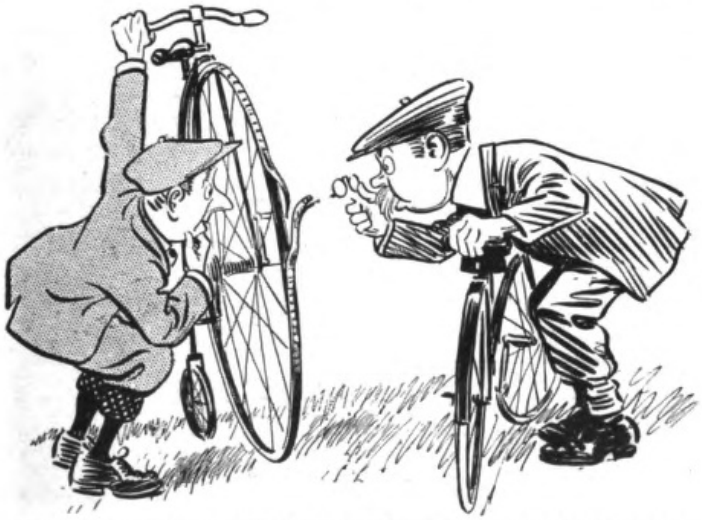
TULA M. CARPENTER, St, Ermin's Hotel, St. James's Park, S.W.

It happened in Gloucestershire, on a hill known locally as Birlip Pitch. This is a long hill, wooded on both sides, with trees whose overhanging branches touch: ancient trees whose roots stand exposed where the rain has washed away the holding earth.

Some idea of the steepness of the hill can be gained from the practice of the local inhabitants in winter-time. When the rough roadway, down which the winter torrents run, becomes covered with sleet and ice the horses are shod with skates (not horseshoes) upon their flanks. Through centuries of practice the intelligent beasts have learned to sit upon their haunches between the shafts and, placing their forelegs firmly upon the slippery surface, with the cart behind them, slide into safety into the valley below.

Anyhow, the adventure which illustrates the longarmofcoincidence happened to my brother and myself during the early summer-time. It was many years ago, when the cross-framed "safety" was making its first appearance. Those who are old enough to remember the cross-framed "safety" will recall that it was just as liable as the high bicycle it was endeavouring to replace to throw its unfortunate rider over the handle-bars. This was due to the very incorrect angle at which the front forks first of all were placed. I was riding a brand-new cross-framed "safety"; my brother still clung to the old-fashioned high bicycle. We had been riding for some hours, for we had started from Oxford first thing in the morning. I can well remember entering upon the first downward stretch of Birlip Pitch. As I have explained, the trees overhung the road, which had been considerably roughened by storms.

My brother was riding ahead of me upon his old "ordinary," when suddenly he struck one of the stones in the roadway. He was pitched forward from the saddle over the handle-bars and, strange to say, was caught by one of the overhanging branches, so that he hung suspended by the waist above the roadway. His machine went careering down the hill. I, who was immediately behind him, struck the same stone, but from the lower level of the seat of my new "safety." I was thrown from my seat with such violence that I turned a complete somersault in the air, and, to my intense surprise, alighted upon the saddle of my brother's "ordinary" bicycle, which was in front of me! My brother, watching from the tree, where he was suspended, dropped from the branch upon the saddle of my "safety" bicycle, and when we got down to the bottom of the hill we found that neither of us had sustained any more injury than the exchange of mounts!



"I HAD RUN LONGITUDINALLY UPON A LONG GRASS SNAKE, WHICH HAD FITTED INTO THE GROOVE OF THE METAL RIM."

The one thing which is strange about this whole episode, probably the only part which anybody would be likely to question, is that upon examining our machines we found that, in coming down the hill, the front wheel thin rubber tyre of the old ordinaryhad been torn away by the roughness of the road. By one of those mysterious chances that do occur, I had run longitudinally upon a long grass snake, which had fitted into the groove of the metal rim and served in place of the rubber!

We were faced with a dilemma, whether to replace the snake and walk the machine into Gloucester or ride on. We decided to ride on. When we got into Gloucester we had the tyre replaced, and next day we cycled back and replaced the faithful snake.

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# The EIGHTH YEAR

By HORACE ANNESLEY VACHELL

*Illustrated by Sydney Adamson*

I.

TOM GATHORNE was given to boasting that he and his pretty wife had married for love. Nobody contradicted the good fellow, although the too constant affirmation exasperated certain cynics. Burdon, for instance, Gathorne's particular pal, had said curtly:—

"What of it? Why do you buck about it? Or, rather, why do you buck about it now?"

"Now?"

"I mean this. A love match is admittedly an experiment which Time alone will justify or repudiate. Common sense should have suggested to you the expediency of selecting a wife with a bit of money, which would have helped you enormously in your business. I don't say, mind you, that you've made a mistake."

"I should think not."

"But I do venture to repeat what must be obvious to all but impassioned sentimentalists, of which you are one, that the first few years of marriage are not a sufficient test. The eighth year, so I am credibly informed, is critical."

"What tosh!"

Burdon shrugged his broad shoulders. He was a doctor, with an increasing practice amongst women. Also he was a bachelor. What our neighbours call *un célibataire endurci*.

Tom Gathorne began his business career as a clerk on the Stock Exchange. Later he had put some five thousand pounds into the business, receiving in exchange a junior partnership. From the first he had prospered. Pluck and Luck—those great twin brethren—had fought by his side.

Bit by bit Burdon and he drifted apart whilst remaining staunch friends. Burdon was godfather to Gathorne's eldest son—there were three boys—and he had kept on good terms with Mrs. Gathorne, although she had refused somewhat peremptorily to employ him as her medical attendant. However, from time to time he "vetted" Tom.

The critical eighth year was now rising above the horizon. By the luck of things Burdon was spending a month with the Gathornes in Scotland. Tom had taken a small grouse moor with some sea-trout

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fishing. Mrs. Tom and the children made up a party of six. The lodge was comfortable, and Mrs. Tom prided herself upon housekeeping. In short, from a material point of view there could be no complaints. And the sport had been excellent. None the less, Burdon was sensible that his old friend was less cheery than usual, and his wife somewhat irritable. Tom took the hill with a shorter stride. Burdon noticed that the children were not particularly robust. About the middle of September he told Tom that he was concerned about him.

"I'm all right," growled Tom.

"You've lost weight, my good fellow. What's wrong? Markets dicky?"

"Best year we've ever had. I may take a forest next season."

"Liver can't be out of whack with all this exercise."

"I tell you I'm as fit as a fiddle."

"Foolish expression that. Fiddles are not always fit, as any violinist will tell you. A Strad is most susceptible, for instance, to the company it keeps. You can't put me off, Tom. I'm worried about you. On my word I am."

His voice softened, and he laid his hand upon Tom's arm, gazing keenly but kindly into his friend's eyes.

"There *is* something wrong," Tom admitted.

"I knew it. Now—out with it."

They were alone in the smoking-room. Mrs. Tom had gone to bed. Each man was smoking his pipe. Whisky and water in long tumblers lent an adventitious aid to confidence.

"Eve," said Tom, moodily, "no longer cares for me."

"Impossible!"

Burdon was genuinely distressed, for Tom spoke with conviction.

"It's like this, old man. She's wrapped up in the kids. She devotes herself to them—at my expense. See?"

Burdon did see. What surprised and annoyed him was the realization of not finding this fact out for himself. He had written a clever pamphlet, entitled "Maternal Instinct." In it he had tried to show that women, speaking generally, were divided into two classes, wives and mothers. He had admitted that some women could adjust satisfactorily the conflicting claims of wifehood and motherhood, but they, so he affirmed, were rare and particular exceptions to the common rule.

He refilled his pipe, waiting for Tom to continue. Tom said, deliberately:—

"You warned me once that the eighth year after marriage was critical. It is. For example, it is a critical time for the first child. Your godson, as you know, is not as sturdy as we could wish. The little beggar is my successful rival. Absurd, but true. I have become—negligible in Eve's eyes. I have tried to blind myself to this; I have tried—God knows!—to make allowance for a mother's anxiety. But—there it is!"

Burdon nodded.

"I suppose," continued Tom, "there is nothing to be done. I've had a wonderful innings, and it's over. It's happened to half-a-dozen other fellows of my acquaintance, and I shall have to grin and bear it as—as they do."

"Oh, no!"

"What do you mean? You can't imagine that I've not done my best. I tell you, man, I've laid siege to her, wooed her all over again. And she's as cold as Charity, poor dear."

"Um!" said Burdon.

"I shall get over it, but I feel rather cheap."

"You look cheap. I think it's time that I prescribed."

"I can prescribe for myself. There's the business. I've worked fairly hard, but I can work harder."

"And widen the gulf."

"I could be keener about shooting and golf."

"You might make love to another woman."

"As a lure? Eve would despise me. And I'm not built that way. Besides, I might be let down again."

Burdon answered briskly: "I put the question merely to hear you answer it. Now, look here; will you let me treat you? I believe that I can do so successfully, but you must place yourself unreservedly in my hands."

"Drugs?"

"Dear me, no! Can I examine you now?"

"You vetted me last May."

"And I was not quite satisfied with your condition then." He rose from his chair. "I shall fetch a stethoscope."

Tom waited, staring into the peat fire, which smouldered dully, giving out neither heat nor light. Eve's love for him was smouldering as dully. He had not a particle of faith in Burdon as bellows, but the old man meant well. Doctors were so ridiculously cocksure! All the same, he felt mildly interested in the vetting. And he knew that he would be annoyed if things were not right. Constitutionally he was as sound as a bell.

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"THE EXAMINATION LASTED THREE MINUTES. SOMEWHAT TO TOM'S ANNOYANCE, BURDON REMAINED SILENT, BUT HIS FACE INDICATED PERPLEXITY AND ANXIETY."

Burdon came back, carrying the stethoscope. He had assumed his professional manner and deportment.

The examination lasted three minutes. Somewhat to Tom's annoyance, Burdon remained silent, but his face indicated perplexity and anxiety. Tom said, nervously :—

"Anything really wrong ?"

"Nothing."

"Then why the deuce do you stare at me like that ? No kidding ! If there is anything wrong, I want to know it."

"Last May the heart's action was not quite regular. Probably you had been smoking too many cigars. To-day you are in tip-top condition."

"Good !" said Tom, much more cheerfully. "I rather hoped to find it otherwise."

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"Eh?"

"You see, Eve is like most women——"

"She isn't."

"She has a current fund of sympathy and sensibility. Women will never admit that this fund is exhaustible. If it were inexhaustible, Eve would have love enough for you and the children. Intuitively, and acting upon a sound economic principle, she is meeting her obligations in exactly the same spirit in which you meet yours."

"Put it a bit plainer, old man."

"You do a big credit business? Yes. And on settlement days you pay up when payment has to be made, and carry over the other accounts."

"I take you. Eve is carrying over—me?"

"She is. Her available cash at the Bank of Love has been paid out to the kids. Therefore your cheques are dishonoured. To change my metaphor, the fountain is not running dry, as you fear, but the stream has been diverted. Between us we must restore the beneficent waters to their old channel."

"How?"

"Your wife must believe that you need irrigating. I shall hint that your health is causing me concern. I might exaggerate a little any cardiac weakness, but unhappily your heart is beating like a bull's. Obviously nothing is left to us but pious fraud. In a very real sense you are suffering from an affection of the heart, and, speaking as your medical man, I advise you to go to Nauheim after leaving Scotland. Eve must accompany you, and the children will be left behind. I shall go, too, and play gooseberry. What do you say?"

"I am to sham illness, excite Eve's pity, abandon the children, and play the tame goat at a beastly German spa?"

"That's admirably put."

"Of course I shall do nothing of the kind."

"Then I'll go to bed."

"I'm awfully obliged, old chap, but you see what you suggest isn't cricket."

"Perhaps not. Good night."

Burdon went to his room. He undressed slowly, thinking of his friend.

"I was a fool," said Burdon to himself, "to tell Tom that he had a clean bill of health. No man can afford to be honest with a patient."

He was still frowning when a sharp tap on the door was followed by Tom's entrance.

"You look heated," said Burdon, calmly.

His host's eyes were sparkling savagely out of a red face.

"It's a bit too thick, old man! Eve is sleeping in young Tom's room. There's not the smallest necessity for it. She admits that. But she likes to be with him. We've had a bit of a rumpus. I'll admit to you that I got the worst of it, because I lost my temper. Eve remained perfectly calm. She talked a lot of twaddle about duty. Somehow it came home to me that she wants a shock. I'm on to this little game of yours, cricket or no cricket. You have my leave to tell my wife that my days are numbered. So they are. Pitch it as strong as you like! She wants stirring up. She accused me, by George, of being *too* robust! You let yourself go. Don't spare her feelings! She doesn't know a word of German, and she'll loathe Nauheim. You'll play doggo and keep out of sight. She'll just have to concentrate on me."

"Right," said Burdon.

## II.

AT breakfast next morning Mrs. Gathorne was preoccupied, as usual, with the children.

"Naughty Tommy kept his mumsie awake."

"Why?"

Brutal monosyllables are a woman specialist's stock-in-trade.

"He was so restless in his sleep, poor darling."

"Too much dessert," said Burdon. "When kids get their deserts they pay for 'em."

Tommy always listened attentively to talk about himself. That is why many children die young. He remarked, solemnly:—

"I do have the indigest. It hurts."

In a whisper, overheard by all, but intended for a doctor's ear alone, Mrs. Gathorne made an illuminating remark:—

"Heartburn."

"Bicarbonate of soda," suggested Burdon, with deep sympathy.

Tom senior toyed with a bit of toast, refusing grilled trout and kidneys.

"Indigestion is the very devil," he observed.

His wife glanced at him.

"How do you know, dear?"

"I do know," he replied, with emphasis.

Just before breakfast Burdon had led him aside.

"Play with your food," he counselled. "When Eve follows the kids out of the dining-room you can pitch in. Twig?"

Tom twigged.

But Mrs. Gathorne did not follow the children when they scampered away. Possibly her conscience was pricking her. Possibly also she wanted justification from a professional man.

"I am so worried about Tommy," she murmured.



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"You needn't be. Is it wise to discuss his infantile ailments before him?"

"Right you are!" exclaimed Tom senior. "Fatal error!"

"Not fatal so far," amended Burdon.

Eve betrayed uneasiness. "I can't help being anxious."

At this moment Tom executed a strategic movement. He rose languidly, walked to the side-table, pocketed a cold grouse and three scones, and vanished. Eve, with her back to the side-table, did not see him. As soon as she was alone with Burdon, she said, eagerly:—

"I came to Scotland on the children's account."

"Really? Not on Tom's?"

"Tom's?"

"Poor old Tom."

"*Poor* old Tom!"

"I vetted him last night in the smoking-room. Can I speak to you with entire frankness?"

"Please do! But you terrify me."

"I will say this to relieve your anxiety. There is nothing organic—as yet."

"Nothing—organic?"

"Nothing—incurable."

"Heavens!"

"I may be mistaken. But in my opinion Tom, with care, may live to be fifty. With —care."

Her face paled. Burdon went on, relentlessly:—

"Tom's appearance is deceptive. You may have noticed that he is thinner?"

"Surely he ought to be thinner?"

"He ate no breakfast this morning."

"Dr. Burdon, please tell me the worst at once."

"How did he sleep last night?"

Eve explained, in some confusion, the reason why Tom had slept, or had not slept, alone. With increasing agitation she entreated the truth.

"Well, there is an affection of the heart—let us call it cardiac weakness. Fortunately, it is amenable to treatment."

Eve's eyes grew moist. Burdon felt a beast, but he continued:—

"You ought to take him to Bad Nauheim after Scotland."

"I hate the idea of going abroad with three children."

"They must be left behind."

"Left—behind?"

"I want you to give your undivided attention to your husband. Talk with him; walk with him; in short, *mother him!*"

"Is it really as serious as that?"

Burdon nodded grimly.

Eve burst into tears!

Afterwards, Burdon admitted to Tom that the affair had been too easy. Both men would have enjoyed a less one-sided victory. Eve surrendered unconditionally. She arranged that the children should be left with her mother, a somewhat Spartan lady, with no inclinations towards spoiling little ones; she secured rooms at Nauheim; she tore Tom from the last week's sea-trout fishing; and, finally, she implored him to consult the greatest English specialist.

"Burdon," said Tom, "understands me."

She was told that Burdon intended to accompany them. This, it will be guessed, was the last straw. Burdon, as she well knew, was an extremely busy man. Tom's condition must be serious indeed if Burdon insisted upon neglecting a fine practice.

## III.

THREE days later the Gathornes and Burdon left England. At the end of a fortnight Tom was eager to allay his wife's anxiety by confessing the truth. Her devotion—so he pointed out—was obvious. The beneficent waters of love had been redirected into the old channel. She could hardly bear Tom out of her sight.

Burdon, however, while admitting this, insisted upon a radical cure.

"Our pious fraud," he said, "will infuriate her. A reaction will take place. She will rush off to the kids and leave you to stew in your own juice."

Tom was constrained to acknowledge the probability of this.

"You must never tell her," continued Burdon.

"Never?"

"Never."

Tom looked abjectly miserable, but one glorious fact illumined the present and future. Eve loved him. Of course, she had always loved him—with natural intermittences.

"Men," remarked Burdon, "must exact love from their wives. I contend that a husband—or a wife, for that matter—is entitled to the fidelity and devotion which he or she can exact."

"By hook or by crook?"

"Unquestionably."

"I feel such a cad."

"There are moments when you look one. Be careful about that."

"And these filthy waters have pulled me down."

"To her level, mark you. It's an interest-

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"'IS IT REALLY AS SERIOUS AS THAT?' BURDON NODDED GRIMLY. EVA BURST INTO TEARS."

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ing pathological fact that a too robust man like yourself is more affectionate when he is below par."

Another fortnight passed.

And then something happened quite unforeseen by Burdon. He was about to return to Harley Street, triumphant in the knowledge that he had treated this affection of the heart to a successful issue. Upon the eve of departure his friend's wife led him aside.

"I want to consult you," she said, "professionally."

"Professionally?"

"You will promise me not to tell Tom. I am feeling rather queer. If there is anything the matter with me, it would upset Tom dreadfully, wouldn't it?"

Burdon nodded.

"Undo your clever stitches?"

"It—might."

"I believe my heart is affected, too. Please examine me."

Burdon looked uneasy. Perhaps for the first time in his life his face betrayed him. The lay mind may refuse to admit it, but conscience does make cowards of some doctors. He told himself, with abject conviction, that this dear little woman had been tried too high. Anxiety concerning Tom had undermined her own health, never too robust.

He began to ask questions.

"Why do you think that your heart is affected?"

"I have disagreeable palpitations. I don't sleep well. How can I sleep when at any moment dear Tom may be snatched from me?"

"I never hinted at such a catastrophe."

"Your voice quavered when you told me there was cardiac weakness. You tried to spare me, but a wife is never deceived."

"At any rate, you can rest easy now. Tom is almost himself again."

"That is what worries me so. Gentle exercise with me is not enough for him. He wants to be shooting and golfing. In his heart he is pining for the office."

"Um!"

"He has quite regained his appetite, but I have lost mine. Please examine me!"

Burdon did so. By this time he had regained his impassive expression, but he was thinking more of Tom than of Tom's wife. He felt absurdly angry with his old friend. How dared he prattle about shooting and golf. Was he growing weary of being mothered? He gave a short grunt of dissatisfaction.

"I am not mistaken," said Eve, quietly; "there *is* trouble."

"Well—er—yes. Nothing to be alarmed about."

"We must keep it from Tom."

"My dear lady, we can't."

"A pious fraud."

His own words came back to roost in a distracted head! Burdon pulled himself together. He smiled reassuringly.

"Tom is strong enough to know the truth."

"I'd sooner get a little worse."

"You may get much worse. Come, come; trust me. I'll speak to Tom. I promise you not to alarm him. Strictly between ourselves, this small trouble of yours will serve to distract his mind from golf and shooting. He has become restive under treatment. I swear solemnly to you, first, that I can put you right in three weeks, and, secondly, that it will do Tom a lot of good to look after you as tenderly as you have looked after him.

Reluctantly she consented that Tom should be told.

Now, picture to yourself, if you can, Tom's consternation and distress when he was told. The poor fellow, hoist with his own petard, wanted to fling himself at his beloved Eve's feet and anoint them with the spikenard of unavailing tears. If anything went wrong with her he would hang himself as a murderer.

"Nothing will go wrong with her, humanly speaking."

"I must set her dear mind at rest about me."

"Then I wash my hands of both of you. This serves you right. You wanted your wife's undivided devotion and love. You've had it."

"At what a cost!" groaned Tom.

"Keep cool. I have noticed lately a restlessness in you, a desire, no doubt, to escape from an uneasy conscience. Possibly, too, this second honeymoon is waning. You have been talking about business and golf."

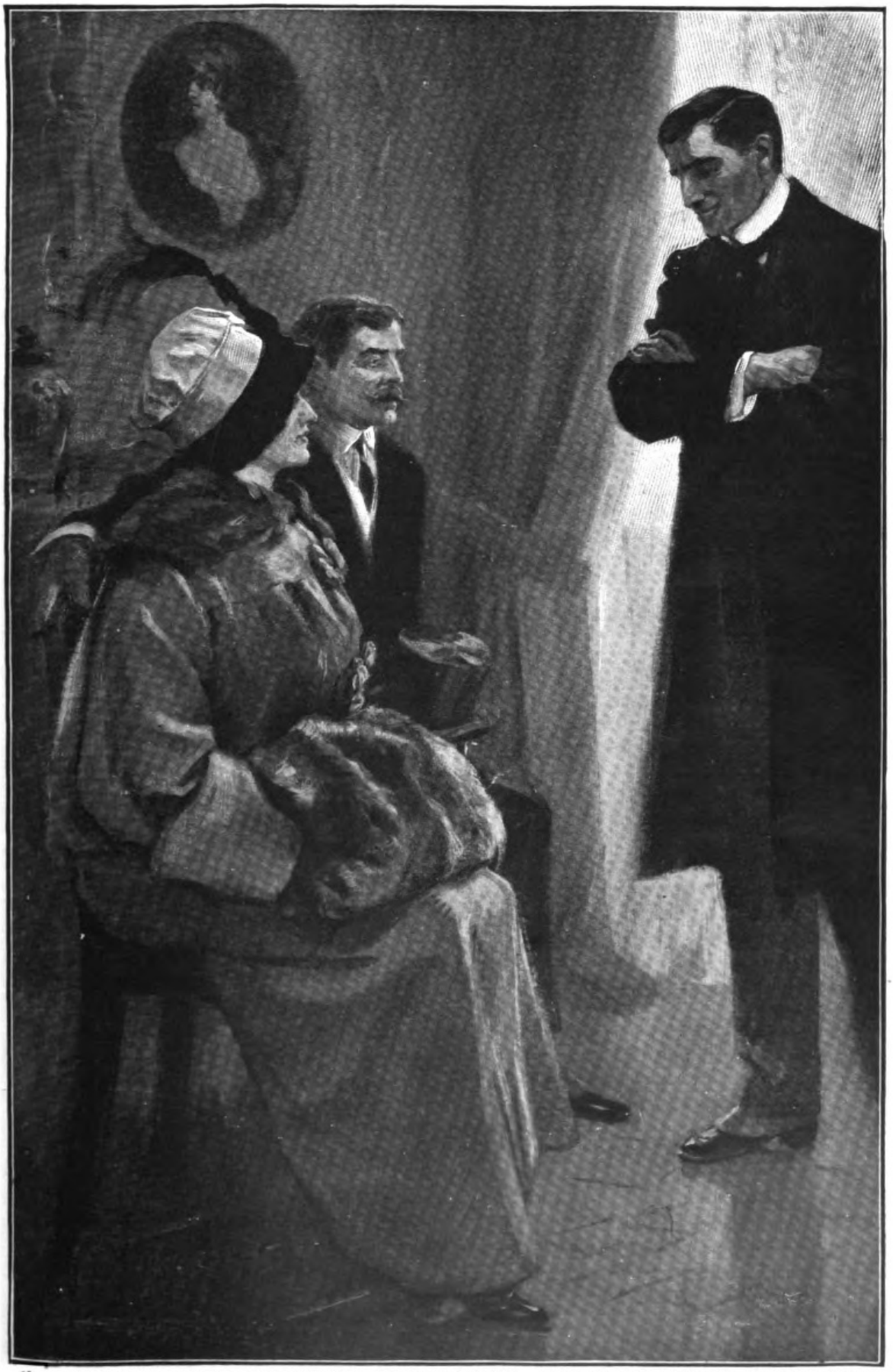
"Merely to divert Eve's mind from dwelling too persistently upon my unworthy self. Together we have been perfectly happy."

"Thanks. I have tried not to play gooseberry. Now for my prescription. Eve and you must motor together through Provence. It is heavenly down there in October. You can make a gastronomic tour. The hotels are excellent. Digesting a *bouillabaise* will distract both your minds."

"Very sound! We could take the kids. Eve has been pining for them, I expect. Lord, I do feel a brute!"

"Possibly. But don't talk like an ass! Eve mustn't be bothered with the children. Allay her anxiety about you, and she'll be as right as rain. Get a good dose of sunburn!

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"I CONGRATULATE YOU, AND I CONGRATULATE MYSELF. THIS IS THE SORT OF MOMENT THAT MAKES A HARD-DRIVEN DOCTOR'S LIFE WORTH WHILE."

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These waters have bleached you. Amuse her, and amuse yourself. In just one month from date report to me in Harley Street."

"You're not leaving to-morrow?"

"If I stayed I should alarm her unnecessarily. My going will confirm my assurance that there is really nothing serious. See to it that she takes the capsules which I shall entrust to you. One after each square meal."

"Anything else?"

"Send for your Rolls-Royce. Live in the open! Eat, drink, and be merry!"

Next day Burdon returned to London.

## IV.

He did not see his two patients till the prescribed month had expired. Then they presented themselves in Harley Street, two sun-tanned specimens of radiant health. Burdon chuckled as he listened to a duet of praise and thanksgiving. He examined each patient in turn, waving his stethoscope as if it were the *bâton* of an all-conquering field-marshal.

"You are," he declared, "absolutely sound. I congratulate you, and I congratulate myself. This is the sort of moment that makes a hard-driven doctor's life worth while. How are the kids?"

"Simply top-hole," said Tom.

"I must admit," said Eve, "that mother understands children better than I do."

"A word with you alone, old man," said Tom.

The men retreated to Burdon's dining-room.

"I haven't told her yet," murmured Tom, "but I must."

"I'll tell her," said Burdon. "You stay here and fortify yourself with a whisky-and-potass. Not a word! In five minutes come back to the consulting-room. 'Shush-h-h-h!"

He hurried away, leaving Tom open-mouthed, unable to express gratitude and relief. Burdon joined Eve and laughed.

"What's the joke?" she asked.

"I can answer that. It's not so easy to *locate* it. Is it on me, on you, or on Tom?"

"I beg your pardon?"

"You are perfectly well and happy?"

"I am, thanks to your wonderful capsules."

"And dear old Tom is happy, too?"

"Ab—solutely!"

"And the children are——"

"As bonny as children can be. And when I pause to reflect that less than three months ago Tom was ill, and the children ailing, and the seeds of disease in me, I call you just a miracle-worker."

"Thanks! Here's Tom. I want to make confession. You have never been ill."

"What?"

Burdon, standing upon his hearthrug, lifted a minatory forefinger.

"This is the eighth and critical year of your marriage, now triumphantly passed. I must remind you, Eve—may I call you Eve?—— Thanks. I must remind you that, much to my chagrin, you once refused to employ me professionally. Tom stuck to me gallantly. Because of that, and because I, so to speak, forced my services on you, I shall charge no fee. Well, quite frankly, I was hurt, and this year in Scotland I confess that I was not altogether displeased to find the children rather the worse for an eminent colleague's ministrations, and you"—he stared keenly at Eve—"on the ragged edge of a breakdown."

Eve could hold her own. She replied with spirit:—

"I don't deny it, but Tom, under your fostering care, was breaking down too."

"That is where the joke comes in. Tom has not been ill either. Under my advice—and I accept full responsibility—Tom malingered. That Nauheim visit was a 'plant.' I faked the affair. I wanted to separate you from the kiddies, because you were fussing them and yourself into coffins. Also, Tom needed that particular attention which only a loving wife can give. Tom said at the time that it wasn't cricket. Medicine is not cricket, although cricket may be good medicine. In fine, I beheld five persons, all of them dear to me, who were floundering helplessly in their own ignorance and inexperience. Tom needed you, and thanks to me again you got him. The children needed plain food, wholesome discipline, and a rest from over-fussing. Thanks to me your nursery has a clean bill of health. Now—where is the joke?"

Eve looked at Tom. The motor trip through Provence had been an imperishable memory. Tom looked at Eve, recalling the mothering.

Eve answered the question.

"The joke," she said, "is on poor mother. She told me this morning that the responsibility of three small boys had brought on acute dyspepsia. You must prescribe for her."

"Have the children left her?"

"Yes; they are at home."

"Tell your mother, with my compliments and respects, that she will be perfectly well in three days."

"Fee or no fee," said Tom, "you must dine with us at the Ritz to-night."

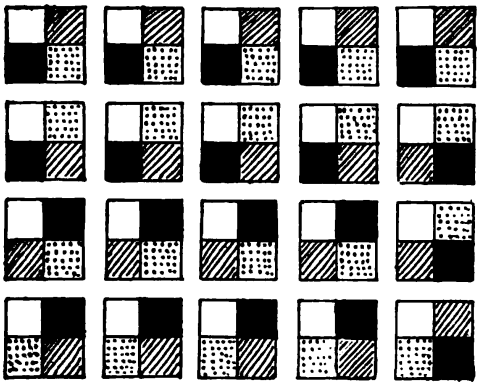
"I shall be delighted," Burdon replied.

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# PERPLEXITIES.

## By HENRY E. DUDENEY.

### 200.—THE TESSELLATED TILES.



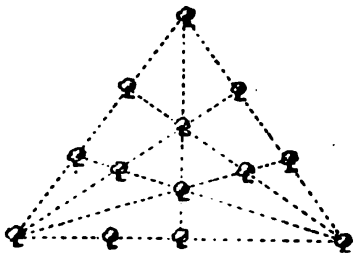
HERE we have twenty tiles, all coloured with the same four colours, and the order of the colouring is indicated by the shadings; thus, the white may represent white; the black, blue; the striped, red; and the dotted, yellow. The puzzle is to select any sixteen of these tiles that you choose and arrange them in the form of a square, always placing similar colours together—white against white, red against red, and so on. It is quite easy to make the squares in paper or cardboard and colour them according to taste, but the order of the colours must be exactly as shown in the illustration.

### 201.—THE FLY AND THE HONEY.

I HAVE a cylindrical cup four inches high and six inches in circumference. On the inside of the vessel, one inch from the top, is a drop of honey, and on the opposite side of the vessel, one inch from the bottom on the outside, is a fly. Can you tell exactly how far the fly must go to reach the honey?

### 202.—ANOTHER TREE-PLANTING PUZZLE.

A MAN planted thirteen trees in the manner shown, and so formed eight straight rows with four trees in every row. But he was not satisfied with that second tree in the horizontal row. As he quaintly put it, "it was not doing enough work—seemed to be a sort of loafer." It certainly does appear to be somewhat out of the game, as the only purpose it serves is to complete one row. So he set to work on a better arrangement, and in the end discovered that he could plant thirteen trees so as to get nine rows of four. Can the reader show how it might be done?



### 203.—EXCAVATIONS.

IT occurs to me to attempt a slight improvement in the "buried words" pastime, by concealing the words in rhymed couplets that shall themselves both give the clue to what is sought and have some apparent relation to the word itself. In the first couplet the word "here" shows that we must seek a place. In the second, "his" points to a man. Can you excavate the nine words?

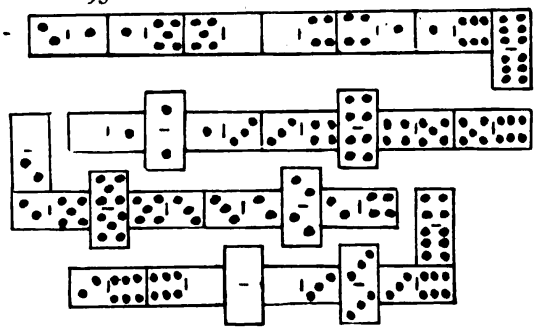
The man of many wives we may find here,
But, ah! he erred, I very greatly fear.
And as his noble fleet goes sailing out,
All down the channel song on song they shout.
Her song is like the song of Philomel;
Ballad and opera both suit her well.
While on this island Tompkins shot a bear—
The only animal taken by him there!
Mere dithyramb and sonnet you may find
His verse; his prose seems better to your mind.
His creatures make the critics' tongues to wag;
Nereids, gods, with dragon, dwarf, and hag.
See here the huntsmen ride abroad to kill;
Away they go, and over dale and hill!
To paint or n t to paint; ah, that's the rub!
Enshrined, ad ired, contemned, in world's hubbub.
Look in the air, though wise as Solomon!
O planets, like yourselves, through space 'tis gone!

### 204.—AN ALPHABETICAL PUZZLE.

THE word "facetiously" contains the six vowels, a, e, i, o, u, y, in their alphabetical order. Can you find another English word that does the same?

## Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles.

### 195.—A NEW DOMINO PUZZLE.



THE illustration shows one way in which the dominces may be laid out so that, when the line is broken in four lengths of seven dominoes each, every length shall contain forty-two pips.

### 196.—TO BE SOLVED MENTALLY.

NINE shillings and ninepence.

### 197.—THE TEN APPLES.

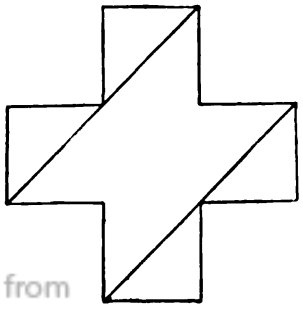
FIRST remove the apple on square 8 to square 10. Then play as follows, where the numbers indicate the squares, as shown in the original diagram: 9 to 11, 1 to 9, 13 to 5, 16 to 8, 4 to 12, 12 to 10, 3 to 1, 1 to 9, 9 to 11.

### 198.—A CHARADE.

THE word is T-ANT-AMOUNT.

### 199.—THE GREEK CROSS.

THE illustration shows how the five pieces can be put together to form the cross.



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# The Baby Show

By MARY TENNYSON
*Illustrated by Miss Hocknell*

IT was an evening in June, and the hay having been carried and stacked, the rain which fell steadily and glistened in the deep ruts in the high road seemed a matter of slight importance in the Midland agricultural district. But the air blew raw and cold, chilling to the hearts the pair of mud-stained tramps who plodded on wearily and silently; the man a yard or so in advance, with a soiled mackintosh bag slung over his shoulder, and the woman, limping painfully in the rear, carrying a child, whom she protected from the downpour with her weather-stained cloak.

They were young, these two vagrants, he being under thirty years of age, and she scarcely more than a girl, and the features of both were handsome, and showed traces of some original refinement; but the expression of sullen, open defiance in the faces blotted out, to the casual observer, all possible good looks, and more than one woman, trudging along the muddy footpath, shivered involuntarily on meeting the man's despairing glance, and thanked Providence that she had a roof to shelter her at the end of her journey, while these two evidently had not.

For more than an hour the man and woman had stumbled on, their sodden boots squelching in the mire, in a silence which was only broken by a groaning sigh from the girl or an oath from the man when a passing wagon, or a noisily-panting motor, covered them with a muddy deluge, and then they reached the outskirts of Bakestone, an agricultural townlet which, despite its insignificant size and meagre population, was the centre of business in the sparsely-peopled locality, and boasted a bachelor mayor and a corporation.

A couple of hundred yards from the commencement of the narrow High Street the woman stopped and relieved her thin arms of some of the strain of the weight of the sleeping child, by resting him on the top bar of a gate which led into a field.

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The man walked on for a few paces, and then, missing the sound of her crunching footsteps, called out without turning his head :—

" Come on, Nan ; what are you stopping for ? "

" I can't go another step," she answered, shortly.

" Why not ? "

" The boy is so heavy."

" Then let him walk."

" Walk on such a road with no shoes to his feet ? " she cried.

" Well, it's only what they call gentle summer rain, isn't it ? " he asked, with a sneering smile.

" It's as cold as winter," she retorted.

He shrugged his thin shoulders as he looked round at her.

" Do as you like, Nan, carry the kid or let him walk. I strained my back over that motor job. The pub.'s not more than half a mile farther on, just over the canal bridge by the church yonder. A strong lad like that can do it easily."

The tired girl's eyes gleamed with wrath.

" I don't believe you've got a heart, Chris," she muttered, unsteadily.

" No, I expect not," he retorted, with another mirthless smile. " Come on, now. There's a storm brewing over there. Put the boy down if you can't carry him, but come on."

" He's asleep, Chris. I can't," she wailed, bursting into tears. " I can't wake him up by putting his little feet into this cold, wet mud ; mine are like ice. Oh, Heaven ! I wish we were all dead."

" Ah, very likely," he responded, bitterly, " but you see we can't arrange these matters for ourselves, so come along."

" And when we do get to the pub., what then ? " she asked.

He flushed and shifted his eyes uneasily.

" I *must* have a drink," he answered. " I'm about done up for it."

" And what about me and the boy ; we stop outside, I suppose ? "

" You must ; you know we can't take the kid in. But there's a porch with seats at the Cat and Mouse."

" A porch ? A nice evening to sit out in a porch, isn't it ? And after ? "

" Oh, after, we can get some bread, and fill the kid's milk-bottle, and turn into a barn I know a quarter of a mile farther on down a lane," he explained, wearily ; " we shall find shelter there at any rate. That is if the barn still stands where it did in my time."

" Your time ? " she repeated, her curiosity faintly stirred.

" Yes. I was born a mile from Bakestone. I'm breathing my native air, but I can't say I find it invigorating. Oh, come on, Nan."

They toiled on again, and for a minute or two neither spoke, but presently the girl stumbled over a stone in the path, and the child, rudely startled out of his sleep, cried aloud, and at the sound the man turned hastily.

An instant he regarded silently the piteous, woe-begone figure of his exhausted wife.

" Here," he said, " since you won't let him walk, give him to me and take the bag."

His tone was rough, but he lifted the boy from the mother's trembling arms gently enough, and the little lad, with his bright eyes still misty with sleep, smiled up into



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the man's face before nestling his curly head, from which the woollen cap had fallen, confidingly against his shoulder.

"Daddy carry Frankie," he lisped, softly, putting up his chubby hand and stroking his father's thin cheek. "My daddy carry Frankie now."

And at the soft, warm touch and the gentle, regular breathing against his breast a sudden revulsion of feeling came over Christopher Allan. Something unfamiliar seemed to stir in his aching heart, bringing with it a sense of comparative comfort. It was quite an indefinite sense, and he would have been entirely puzzled to explain why at that moment the black, impenetrable shadow which darkened his future seemed to show through its density a tiny rift of light.

Hugging the child closely to him, he walked slowly forward, and presently the little lad raised himself and, slipping one arm round his father's neck and kissing his throat lovingly, with a murmur once more nestled his head down and fell asleep.



"'DADDY CARRY FRANKIE,' HE LISPED, SOFTLY, PUTTING UP HIS CHUBBY HAND AND STROKING HIS FATHER'S THIN CHEEK."

Christopher Allan stopped, that his weary, lagging wife might catch up with him.

"He's off to sleep sound," he said, "and you're right, Nan—he is a weight, a wonderful weight for a kid of his age."

His tone was gentle as he looked down on her, and her eyes again filled with tears.

"He doesn't strain your back, does he?" she asked, quickly. "If he does, give him to me. I'm rested now; I can manage quite well until we get to the pub."

But Allan shook his head.

"You've done your share of carrying for to-day, Nan. He doesn't strain me a bit. I only meant it's queer that we two wasters should have such a kid as this, eh?"

"We weren't always wasters, Chris," she responded, unsteadily.

"No, and you were a very pretty girl, Nan. The little chap takes after you."

A faint glow of colour rose in the girl's faded cheek, and her eyes brightened as she looked quickly up at him.

"Why, Chris," she cried, "Frankie's the very image of you."

"Oh, please Heaven, no," he muttered, hoarsely, and after that they relapsed into silence again.

But neither was quite so heavy-hearted, for she had seen in her husband's eyes a gleam of his old expression, and he felt to have shifted some of the burden which before had almost crushed him.

The old-fashioned wayside inn, the Cat and Mouse, at the corner of Bakestone Market Square, had lately had an extensive apartment yclept the "saloon" added to its rather limited accommodation for thirsty travellers; but on that particular chilly, rainy evening the saloon was deserted, and a group of a dozen men, all of them regular *habitués* of

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the place, were gathered round the blazing fire in the vast kitchen at the back of the bar.

And the comely, rather sad-looking woman who waited upon them smiled reassuringly when the latest comer, a young man in a chauffeur's livery, apologized for intruding on what he called her domestic privacy.

"You're welcome, Carpenter," she said. "The kitchen is more cheery than the saloon such a night as this."

"Yes, and it's more home-like, too," an old man interposed. "I don't take to that new saloon a bit, missus."

His tone was testy, and the good-tempered chauffeur turned to a portly man seated in the most comfortable chair the room afforded.

"And what's the news with you, Bostock?" he said, with a sly wink at the rest, which, unperceived by Bostock, provoked a general slow, bucolic grin.

"Well, good news, my son. The kiddy's put on another pound of flesh."

"Holy Moses! Since when?" Carpenter asked, as the surrounders chuckled audibly.

"Why, since this day week. He is a splendid specimen, is my Samuel! The best of the bunch, and that's saying a lot."

"What do you feed him on, Bostock?" a burly carter inquired. "Do you give him tallow candles to eat, and cod-liver oil to drink when he's thirsty?"

A wrathful gleam shone in Bostock's protuberant eyes.

"You're trying to be funny, I suppose, Mr. Grice," he said, pompously. "My children have all been fed on good, wholesome stuff, and they've had their meals regular, and no stupid sweets or muck of that sort."

"Poor little devils!" Carpenter interrupted.

"*And* they come of good stock, let me tell you," the irate Bostock continued, "and what's the result? One of mine has taken his worship the Mayor's prize each time. And Samuel will take it to-morrow—you'll see."

"Charlie Thompson's baby is a lot better looking than your Samuel," a young fellow said, with a grin. "He *has* got a nose on him, at any rate, has young Tommy, and your Sammy's eyes are so regular bunged up with fat he can scarcely see out of 'em."

"You're a fool, Jack Murray," Bostock responded, loftily. "You know nothing about babies; how should you, a simple youth like you? But his worship, Dr. Preston, he's a judge, and it'll be a spanker that'll beat my Samuel to-morrow, and that spanker ain't to be found in Bakestone, and well you know it. Samuel comes of good stock, my boy, and good stock's bound to come out on top. Here's his health."

He lifted his pewter pot, but it was empty, and looking round to get it replenished, he found that the landlady had disappeared.

"Mrs. Barclay has gone," he said; "she was here just now."

"Of course she's gone," the testy old man Timmins cried; "we get too much of your precious Samuel here, Bostock; I'm sick of the sound of him. Let's hope his fat won't squeeze every ounce of sense out of him. If you'd got your share of brains, which you haven't, you'd remember as Mrs. Barclay can't stand too much talk about babies, and she with her little 'un and her husband drowned dead on the same day only three years ago."

Bostock shook his head slowly.

"I did forget, Mr. Timmins, I admit it; but just now my heart is uplifted within me. And it's not unnatural seeing that to-morrow is the day. A great day for my Samuel, and for his father."

"Oh, Bostock, you are a fair treat!" the youthful wag cried. "And what price his mother, eh?"

"His mother has done her duty and followed out my instructions to the letter," was the sententious reply. "She also deserves credit."

A roar of laughter ensued, in which the aged Timmins joined heartily, and Bostock, scarlet with anger, rose, and was half-way across the kitchen when the door was pushed open from the outside and Christopher Allan entered, followed immediately by Mrs. Barclay.

The man's face was flushed with exhaustion and hasty walking, and his voice was hoarse and unsteady, as flinging himself down on the nearest bench, he demanded to be served with whisky at once.

The landlady regarded him doubtfully. To her experienced glance every line in Allan's haggard countenance proclaimed the man who had fallen into the drink-habit, but a minute's inspection convinced her that at least this man was not intoxicated at that moment, but was altogether miserable and in need of some restorative. Moreover there was that in his obvious pathetic consciousness of his own degradation which appealed to her womanly sympathies. That bedraggled, hopeless tramp had not always been as he was then, she was certain of it. His speech was superior, and his thin hands, though grimy enough, were not those of a labourer.

She pointed to the chair by the fire, just vacated by the outraged Bostock.

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"Sit there and dry yourself, you're shockingly wet," she said, kindly. "Hadn't you best have your drink hot?"

His voice seemed to be choked in his throat, but he moved into the chair, looking gratefully at her, and nodded, while leaning forward he held his well-formed hands to the comforting warmth, and at that moment came the first vivid flash of lightning, and a deafening, crackling volley of thunder, which sent the woman's two hands to her ears, and caused young Jack Murray to spring to his feet with an exclamation of unabashed fear.

Then the woman started as another sound mingled with the hissing of the pelting rain. A child's sharp scream of terror.

"A child!" she faltered, "out in this storm!"

"It's my wife and kid," the new-comer explained, uneasily; "they are in the porch. I couldn't bring the kid in here."

With flashing eyes the woman turned on him.

"I'll have him in," she cried, "if I lose my licence for it. I'll have him in."

The landlady quickly returned, carrying on her left arm Allan's terrified child, while with her right she supported the trembling, half-fainting mother.

Frankie's shrill screams stopped abruptly at the sight of his father and of the cheerful, blazing fire, and in a minute he was stretching his hands towards it, laughing with delight as, holding on to his father's knee, he balanced on his sturdy legs, his pink toes showing through the gaping holes in his worn-out shoes; and Mrs. Barclay watched him with a yearning, hungry admiration in her moist eyes, while the assembled men grinned in sympathetic appreciation.

But the boy's clothes, though ragged and scanty, were evidently dry, and the hostess turned her attention to the drooping mother.

"You're wet through!" she cried.



"IN A MINUTE HE WAS STRETCHING HIS HANDS TOWARDS THE FIRE, LAUGHING WITH DELIGHT AS, HOLDING ON TO HIS FATHER'S KNEE, HE BALANCED ON HIS STURDY LEGS, HIS PINK TOES SHOWING THROUGH THE GAPING HOLES IN HIS WORN-OUT SHOES."

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"I've got a change of under-things and another skirt, such as it is, in the bag," Nan answered, faintly.

"Come along with me, then," Mrs. Barclay said, cheerily, "and while you get into dry things my Sally shall make you some tea and get some bread and milk for the ducky boy."

And when the two had left Frankie monopolized the entire attention, and the fascinated young Jack Murray waxed quite eloquent over his manifold attractions.

"I never see such a kid in all my days," he cried, with boyish enthusiasm.

"Nor I, and my days add up a long sight more than yours, Jackie," Timmins assented, patronizingly. "The boy's a brave child, sure enough."

"Brave! I bet you he is brave with those wide-open blue eyes; he could look a lion in the face," the irrepressible Murray continued. "And see his red lips and cheeks and his yellow curls, just for all the world like that picture of 'Bubbles,' *and* his legs and his arms. Lord, think of that little, blown-out, pig-faced brute, Sammy Bostock, in comparison with that there splendid kiddie!"

A hubbub of affirmative voices arose, during which the doctor Mayor's chauffeur sat perfectly silent, with his keen, humorous eyes half shut, gazing at Christopher Allan, who was evidently enjoying the encomiums passed upon his son.

But the noise in the room suddenly abated as Carpenter rose and, dragging his chair with him, seated himself by the side of the tramp.

"Haven't we met before—to-day?" he commenced.

Allan shook his head.

"Not likely," he said, wearily. "I've been tramping the road since eight o'clock this morning."

"Aren't you the chap who helped me when our motor broke down eight miles out?"

"Very likely. I did a job of the sort, and I'm spending some of your half-crown now. I don't recognize you, though."

"No. You were taken up with your business, and a clever job you made of it. There's not much you don't know about motors, mate, I saw that."

"I drove a taxi in London for three years," Allan said, sighing.

"And you didn't find it pay, eh?" Carpenter responded, regarding him with keen interest.

"Oh, it paid well enough, until——"

"Until?"

Allan stirred restlessly in his seat as he shook his head almost fiercely.

"Oh, what's the good of talking about it? I lost my licence. That's enough said, isn't it?"

"More than enough, mate. I'm sorry," Carpenter replied, soothingly. "I don't generally poke my nose into other people's business, but as I sat looking at you and the kiddie I couldn't keep from wondering."

"Wondering? What at?"

"Wondering where I'd seen your face. Not this morning on the road, but years ago, and yet you come from London, and I've lived hereabouts all my life."

"I was born a mile from Bakestone," Allan muttered, hoarsely. "But all my people are dead and gone long ago."

Carpenter's figure suddenly stiffened and a gleam of mischief came into his eager eyes.

"That's what I wanted to get at, mate," he cried. "I say, would you care for the chance of winning fifty pounds in a competition?"

A gasp of uncontrolled excitement burst from the group of listeners, but Allan only shrugged his shoulders.

"You are chaffing, man," he said, drearily, "and I'm in no humour for it."

"I'm not," Carpenter went on, quickly. "Honest Injun, I'm speaking in downright earnest. Look here, mates," he went on, turning to the entranced listeners. "This chap was born within a mile of Bakestone, he says; if he can prove his words what's to hinder his entering that kiddie there for the Mayor's prize of fifty pounds for the finest baby under three years of age whose father hails from a radius of three miles from Bakestone?"

Another gasp of concentrated, almost incredulous, delight broke from the bystanders, and then Jack Murray lost his head and, snatching up the astonished child, held him aloft in his strong young arms.

"Look at him, the young hero!" he cried. "King baby, that's what he is! Now, what price Bostock's young elephant?"

And the ancient Timmins beat his withered hands upon his knees as, with tears of laughter running down his nose, he regarded the capering lad, and the half-frightened, half-delighted child, who held on tightly with his fingers embedded in Murray's curly hair.

The noise in the kitchen was at its height when Mrs. Barclay and Nan returned, and then everything had to be explained to them; and Carpenter's anxious questions elicited the facts that in the mackintosh bag the

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"JOSEPH BOSTOCK, CARRYING THE ENORMOUS SAMUEL, ENTERED THE HALL."

vagrants carried with them their marriage lines, as well as the child's birth and baptismal certificates.

Allan, now keenly on the alert, announced himself as the only son of Thomas Allan, blacksmith of a village in the locality, on whose death, twelve years before, he had betaken himself to London, and old Timmins recollected clearly the sudden death of the blacksmith whose wife had predeceased him two years, and the departure of their orphan son.

"And I can swear to you," Carpenter said. "Why, we went to the Bakestone Grammar School, the two of us. So that's all right. Don't you make any mistake," he went on, with a sly wink. "His worship the doctor won't make many difficulties. He'll judge the kiddies on their merits, and between you and me he's about fed up with old Bostock's prize progeny."

But when the excitement had simmered down a little Nan's tired voice was heard.

"We are none of us decent enough to show ourselves at the Town Hall," she faltered.

"Oh, I'll lend you a clean blouse and apron, and find a bit of ribbon for your hat," Mrs. Barclay said, kindly, "and you'll sleep here, the lot of you, to-night. And a good brush-up and a clean collar will make Mr. Allan quite smart."

"And my Sunday tie, he's welcome to that!" Jack Murray interposed. "Lord, I wouldn't miss the sight of Bostock's face when that kiddie appears on the platform for a golden sovereign."

"But the child," Nan protested, "he's got nothing else besides a pair of socks and a ragged shirt."

Mrs. Barclay's face grew suddenly pale, and for a moment she stood without speaking, then, lifting the little lad, and holding him tightly to her breast, she again went towards the inner door.

"Come with me," she said, unsteadily, to Nan, and when the two had gone old Timmins drew the cuff of his coat across his moistened eyes.

"She's gone to that bottom drawer of hers, you take my word for it," he said, in an awestruck whisper.

"What bottom drawer, Mr. Timmins?" Jack demanded, softly.

"The drawer she keeps all her little lad's

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hings in. My granddaughter served Mrs. Barclay for a year after that there terrible drowning tragedy, and she told me the missus went to that bottom drawer and cried her heart out every day of her life. Your boy, Mr. Allan, will be clothed and comforted out of the widow's bottom drawer, you'll see."

For hours Christopher Allan lay wakeful by the side of his sleeping wife and child. His brain was seething with excitement; he had taken more spirit than he ought, for three or four of the men had insisted on standing glasses around to drink to the success of Frankie and to the confusion of the unpopular Bostock, and he had eaten scarcely anything, although food had been pressed upon him.

For a year and more Christopher Allan had felt it fortunate that he had no appetite, for it was seldom that he could have satisfied it, whereas a few pence spent in drink meant forgetfulness and temporary ease of mind, and if he did shorten his life, what then? He was a rank failure, and better out of the way.

And now the chance of fifty pounds! For a while at least he could eat and drink and be merry. Fifty pounds! He could clothe himself and the wife and child decently, and then they would go the round of the race meetings. Probably this chance meant that his luck had changed. Anyway he'd try it, and at least he'd have some fun for his money.

The Bakestone Town Hall the following afternoon hummed with excitement when Dr. Preston, the Mayor, supported by the members of the Corporation, appeared upon the platform, to be received with a hearty burst of applause.

The doctor, although considered a bit of a crank in the agricultural district, with his strict ideas on eugenics, and his intolerance of slovenly, insanitary methods, was one of the most popular men in the town. Possessing some private means he spent what he made freely, his latest "fad" being to offer a prize of fifty pounds every alternate year for the finest baby born in wedlock whose father was a native of the locality.

Jack Murray writhed with painfully-suppressed merriment when Joshua Bostock, carrying the enormous Samuel, and followed closely by his careworn, faded wife and bulky, tight-skinned, shiny-faced offspring, entered the hall, with a smile of anticipated triumph on his pompous, foolish face.

Child after child was carried up to the platform and judged, but only Mrs. Bostock



"SHE PLACED IN THE ARMS OF THE ASTONISHED DR. PRESTON A CHILD AT WHOSE BEAUTY HE EXCLAIMED ALOUD."

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returned to her place with anything like a cheery countenance, the other babies were completely outclassed by the colossal Samuel; but presently there was heard a curious buzz among the audience at the back, and then a young woman seated in the front of the hall, poorly but neatly dressed, came forward and, mounting the three or four steps, placed in the arms of the astonished Dr. Preston a child at whose beauty he exclaimed aloud.

There wasn't a dissentient voice among the judges. Frankie carried all before him. He was not so heavy by three or four pounds as the stolid, unwinking Samuel, but in every other respect he was unapproachable, and the men in the hall roared with delight as the baby screamed with laughter, regarding the whole thing as a huge joke when Dr. Preston handled his sturdy limbs, and measured his chest; and the women clapped enthusiastically as, when all was over, the little fellow stretched out his hands, and taking the doctor's face between them, pulled it down and kissed him on the lips.

There was another convivial gathering that evening at the Cat and Mouse, and Frankie was made the excuse for rather reckless libations; but Christopher Allan was, it was considered, strangely silent and depressed in the exhilarating circumstances.

He would not admit it to anyone, but Allan felt bitterly disappointed; he had anticipated confidently the pleasure of spending at least a small portion of that fifty pounds in standing treat lavishly all round, even to the extent of half-a-dozen bottles of Mrs. Barclay's best champagne; but all he had been told at the Town Hall after the public announcement of Frankie's victory (which was received with frantic applause) was that Dr. Preston would expect to see him at his own private residence at ten o'clock the following morning.

Mrs. Barclay had again offered them hospitality for the night, but it fretted Allan sorely that he must increase his obligations to her, even though in a few hours he would be able to compensate her generously.

Dr. Preston received Allan kindly enough, but his genial face grew grave and almost stern as he gazed earnestly at the man before him.

As on the preceding afternoon, Allan presented a comparatively decent appearance, for his ragged clothes had been brushed and cleaned and mended, and his cracked boots blacked and polished; but the doctor's keen eyes detected at once drink and its consequent demoralization in every line of what should have been a handsome face, and in the slouching pose of what had been originally a well-knit figure. But presently the sternness in his eyes softened, for there was an indefinable something about this wreck of a man who stood with bent head before him which aroused his sympathy, and his tone was almost gentle as he motioned him to a chair.

"I congratulate you," he commenced. "That's a splendid little lad of yours, Mr. Allan. He does you and your wife the greatest credit."

Allan emitted a short, harsh laugh.

"My wife, perhaps," he said. "She's many times gone hungry that the kid might eat his fill. He's not got much to thank me for. It's the other way about, it seems to me."

"What do you mean, man?"

Allan glanced up, and then averted his eyes quickly under the doctor's shrewd, penetrating glance.

"Why, about this fifty pounds. Frankie's doing more for me than I ever did for him, I'm afraid."

Dr. Preston hesitated a moment before he replied.

"You understand about this fifty pounds, I suppose?" he asked. "It has been explained to you?"

"No, nothing has been explained beyond the fact of the prize being offered," Allan answered, almost testily. He wanted to end the interview; the doctor's penetrating gaze distressed him.

Dr. Preston rose, and, walking to the mantel, turned his back on his visitor.

"Mr. Allan," he said, slowly and distinctly, "this fifty pounds is for your child's benefit. It will be placed in the bank here to his credit by me at noon to-day, and there it will remain, accumulating to some extent, until he attains his sixteenth birthday. On that day you, or someone appointed by you, will have the power to withdraw the sum on satisfying me, or my executors, that it can be expended in apprenticing the lad, or starting him in some profitable career."

For a moment there was complete silence, and then Allan, breathing short, stumbled to his feet, and, scarcely trusting himself to speak, muttered a hoarse "Good morning" and turned towards the door.

"Stay one minute," Dr. Preston said, pitifully. He read the truth, and his heart ached over this mournful spectacle of degraded, hopeless manhood.

"Take this certificate with you," he continued, thrusting a roll of stiff paper into the other's nerveless, trembling hand. "Your

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wife will like to have it. And remember this, Allan," he went on, laying his hand on the vagrant's shoulder, unconsciously raising his voice—" remember this. That child of yours is a splendid fellow. On you rests the responsibility of his future. He is in every way well armed for the fight. Physically perfect and markedly intelligent, but he needs your help now, and God forgive you if you blight this promising life."

Two hours later the warm June sun shone down on Christopher Allan and his wife and child, as they rested in a field two miles out of Bakestone. The boy had walked the distance, and was merry and entirely happy in the possession of a Teddy bear, presented to him by the admiring Jack Murray, whose eyes were moist as he took leave of the child, and of a currant-bun at which he nibbled contentedly. But he no longer wore the pretty clothes with which he had been provided the day before, and again his rosy toes showed through the gaps in his shoes.

The man and woman looked fagged and weary. Both were suffering from the inevitable reaction following a day of excitement, and the girl's face wore a frown as she regarded her husband.

Why had he not allowed Frankie to keep the things Mrs. Barclay was so eager to give? He had gone away with scarcely a " Thank you " to all those good, kind folk, and he had turned from Carpenter, the doctor's chauffeur, when he had held out his hand in farewell. He cared neither for wife nor child; he had walked farther in front of her than ever, and when Frankie had run on and had caught at his hand he had shaken him off roughly.

And now what was before them? Tramp, tramp, tramp, with the hopeless spectacle of the bent, slouching figure going on in front of her, with never a kind word, wanting food and shelter.

And still he did not speak, but he drew his breath with difficulty, and his face was pale and drawn, and in his eyes she might have seen, if her heart had not been so hardened against him, an almost wild despair. Presently she leant forward, and snatching at the bag, which lay on the ground between them, drew from it the certificate. Opening it she held it up with a mirthless laugh.

" Mrs. Barclay said we ought to have it framed and hang it up in our parlour," she said, bitterly. " Our parlour! Heaven help us! Look at it, Chris, and say something, can't you?"

He raised his haggard eyes and stared at the paper gleaming in the sun, and the child, with his golden curls glistening, pointed at it and laughed aloud.

And then of a sudden with a stifled cry the man fell over on his side, and great, tearing sobs broke from him as he covered his face.

" Oh, God!" he moaned, " if I were only different. But it is too late. Oh, if I could only do something."

With a scared face the woman bent over him.

" Chris," she whispered. " Oh, Chris! it can't be too late, and you a clever man when the drink's not in you. Mr. Carpenter, he said so. Oh, Chris! oh, Chris!"

For a few minutes Allan sobbed his heart out, and then the storm of passionate emotion passed, and he lay quiet and motionless.

The woman, for once respecting his mood, did not speak to him, but busied herself in comforting and reassuring the frightened child, and presently Allan rose slowly, and averting his face, walked unsteadily towards the gate of the field.

" Stay here," he gasped. " Nan, however long I am, stay here until I come back."

And the girl, half-scared, half-comforted, drew the child into the shade of the tall hedge and, clasping him tightly to her, rested her head upon the bag and fell asleep.

Nan was still sleeping when, after three hours' absence, Christopher Allan laid his hand gently upon her shoulder. She started awake with a cry, but her eyes lighted up with an undefined hope as they met her husband's. Allan's face was very grave, but his gaze was direct and unwavering, and on his lips was a pathetic smile.

" I have got work, Nan," he said. " I am going to turn over a new leaf. Carpenter has found me a good job. He remembers my case in the papers and that I was acquitted of manslaughter by the coroner's jury. He always felt that it was a pure accident, he says. Come, Nan, you shall have a parlour to hang that certificate in before you're a week older."

He lifted Frankie in his arms, and uncovering his own head, placed his hand upon the child's golden curls.

" I am responsible for his future," he said, almost inaudibly, " and God forgive me if I blight his life."

The words were unfamiliar to the awestruck woman, but in the man's ears they had rung for hours, torturing him to the verge of madness.

And then Christopher Allan and Nan passed slowly out of the field together, and now hand in hand she walked by his side between the flowering hedges towards a better and a brighter life.

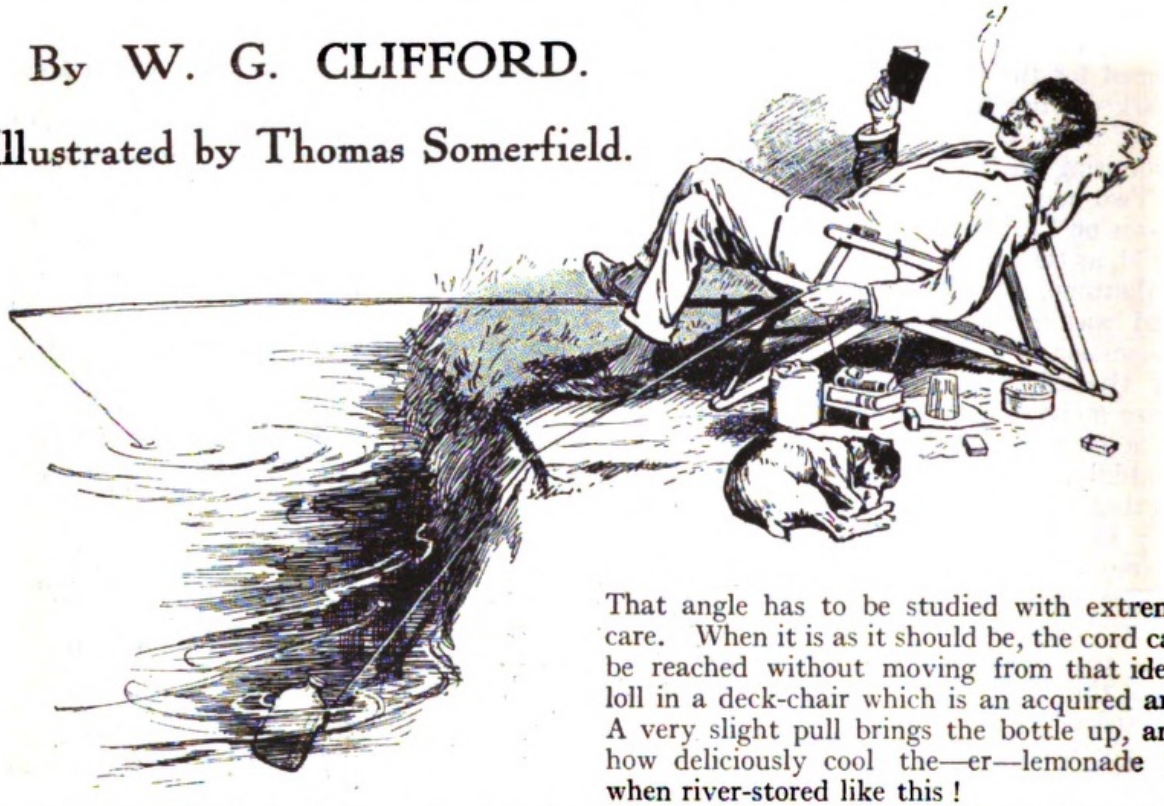


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# THE KILL-SPORT.

By W. G. CLIFFORD.

Illustrated by Thomas Somerfield.



FISHING is a good enough sport, and has its strong points for one whose pen strays at times in the direction of fiction. I fish, in a sporting sort of way, in a pretty little river which flows past my garden. 'Tis well 'tis so, for a salmon river would not tempt me to walk far for my sport, and not for the chance of hooking a whale would I purchase a railway ticket on angling solely bent. There is a natty little platform by the riverside within a dozen yards of my drawing-room window which does well enough for me. On it I place one deck-chair, one tobacco-jar, two good pipes in case of accident, sundry boxes of matches, two or three favourite books, my good dog Don, and, if I mean to fish for long, I put a cushion in the deck-chair. Nothing to drink goes on my platform—it is a sad failing to put drink there—a great and fundamental error which it pains me to see so frequently committed by those who call themselves sportsmen and anglers. Drink, I repeat, has no place on my platform—I sink it in a tight, screw-stoppered bottle in the stream, secured by a line made fast to the most convenient angle of the arm of my deck-chair. That angle has to be studied with extreme care. When it is as it should be, the cord can be reached without moving from that ideal loll in a deck-chair which is an acquired art. A very slight pull brings the bottle up, and how deliciously cool the—er—lemonade is when river-stored like this!

Let me see, now; there *is* something else. Yes, of course, I have a rod—only one. There is a line on the rod, also a float, and one small hook, usually at the farthest extremity of the line, but occasionally lapped round a couple of shot, which keep the float from being too assertive. My float is a nice, quiet grey quill, and does not bob about too much. Worms I loathe—paste or bread-crust will not stand more than one good bite without coming off the hook. Gentles are better, although wriggling little beasts at their best, and having trained mine into cleanly habits in a tray of sand, I impale quite a number on the hook, swing them into the water, and drop the butt of the rod on a special rest I have designed within "lolling" reach of my right hand. There I sit and smoke and read, and if I chance to glance from my book and see my float strangely moved by some unseen force I tilt up the rod and secure a gudgeon—every time a gudgeon—and nothing but a gudgeon.

I hold the gudgeon championship of the river, and am supremely content. I am prepared to back myself against all comers to catch fewer gudgeon in more time than any other fisherman in the county, and I find the sport most enjoyable. The bites are rather

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a nuisance, but I manage fairly well on a system of my own. When I turn a page of my book I look at the float, and when I have read three chapters I haul up the line to see if there is any bait left. I have in this manner caught gudgeon, small ones, at the end of the third chapter, but my specimen fish have all been taken at the turn of the page. I have tried to improve on this plan, but without much success so far. Still, I live in hopes—Don is a very sensible dog, and I think I may yet train him to growl when I have a bite.

All went well with my fishing until my friend Freddy came to stay with me. He is, I should say, one of the most skilful kill-sports that ever lived. There is about thirteen stone of him—twelve stone seven or so of a thorough sportsman and the rest a joyous boy who refuses to grow up. In strange lands he has chased stranger beasts; he has had his chickens looted by a python and has brought up a baby leopard by hand on condensed milk. He makes his centuries at cricket and billiards, plays football more than passably well in his "golf-age," and once stunned a nigger by hitting him on the head with his bare fist. He is the first man I should pick to have with me in a tight corner, and the last I want to go fishing with. His remarks concerning my beautifully-organized apparatus for the slaughter of gudgeon were most scornful and unkind. There were good fish in the river, he said, and he meant to have them out of it, not by lying in wait for them as I did, but by energetic and skilful methods calculated, with normal luck, to drive the local fishmonger out of business, unless he cared to combine with my friend.

I said nothing much, but, being gifted with a strength of character which shines at its brightest and best when I have resolved not to exert myself, I steadfastly refused to aid and abet him in his manifold schemes for depopulating the river of its rightful inhabitants, and sat firmly in my deck-chair catching gudgeon in my own truly sporting fashion. I knew there were good fish in the river, for I had seen them many a time and oft. Very pretty they looked, too, swimming past my float on a fine, bright morning. It was good to gaze lazily down on their steel-blue backs, and to see a sudden shimmer of silver as one turned to seize something worth eating. Roach, I believe they were, but I am not quite sure about it. They never meddled with my bait, or gave me the least trouble in return for the stately swim they delighted me with.



"SOMETIMES A SPORTIVE FISH WOULD OBLIGE WITH A SPLENDID SPLASH, LEAPING CLEAN OUT OF THE WATER."

Towards evening I rewarded them with crusts of bread, which scarce left my hand before they were attacked vigorously by shoals of dace and small fry, breaking the surface of the water into myriads of dimpling, baby wavelets and oily little circles as they sported ceaselessly with the floating crusts. But when the bread had drifted a good score feet from me, away into the deep shadows beneath the willows, so far away that in the fading light the crusts became mere light blurs on the dark surface of the river, then a

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sharp and sudden swirl and a goodly knock which sent the crust half out of water told of the big ones getting to work. Hither and thither rocked the ever-diminishing crust, sometimes nearly forced clear in air, then nearly sucked under, and all the while darting about like a spinning water-beetle as the snouts of the hungry fish struck it this way and that. Sometimes a sportive fish would oblige with a splendid splash, leaping clean out of the water and descending with a flop which brought the circling wavelets to my feet and scared a busy water-rat out of his straight swim from bank to bank.

In very truth, a goodly and pleasing scene on a calm summer evening, and at times, when the fish were bold, I got to know them by sight. Two stood out from the rest—roach, well over a pound apiece, certainly, and fully two pounds each if hooked and lost. One had a scar across his shapely back, doubtless a relic of a long-past encounter with the teeth of a pike—for there are pikey parts in my river. Him I named Willie, his companion William, and, when very still, I have seen the pair poise in crystal amidstream scarce six feet from my chair, while the sun at noon fell hot on the glinting river. With half-closed eyes I have watched them floating lazily among the tangled stems of a bed of water-lilies under the far bank, or have seen them hang as if suspended from a broad green leaf overhead; and more than once I have seen nothing except a section of a reddish tail breaking the still surface between the plants in the quiet middle of the bed.

In time I grew quite friendly with that handsome pair—friendly in spirit, that is; they were far too wary to permit friendship in the flesh, or, rather, fish. Still, I liked to persuade myself that they were a little less shy with me than with strangers, just a shade slower with that whisk of the tail and sinuous twist of the body which sped them into watery oblivion like a flash when they became aware that a pair of human optics were turned in their direction. Before Freddy came I had hopes—faint, 'tis true, but yet hopes—of training those fish to sport boldly and feed without fear whenever I bade them come forth and show themselves—but this was not Freddy's ideal.



"AN ANGLING OUTFIT ENOUGH TO START A USEFUL AND AMBITIOUS FISHING-CLUB."

A journey to town saw him return laden with rods, reels, lines, hooks, floats, landing-nets, bait-cans, and a quantity of other angling outfit, in all, I should say, enough to start a useful and ambitious fishing-club. From daybreak till dark he fished with tremendous energy every inch of the river within a mile each way of my house, respecting only the few square feet where dangled my gudgeon lure. So vigorously did he dig for worms that I was able to save two whole days' wages which otherwise would have gone into the pocket of the horticultural expert who tends my fair domain for three shillings a day and his beer money.

The local butcher grew quite angry with Freddy. Rightly, and with just indignation, did the worthy tradesman resent the repeated insinuation that he "must have some gentles about the place somewhere." "Just as if I stock 'em, sir,'" he protested to me, as he brought the flat of his knife down smack on a buzzing bluebottle and thereby squashed another of Freddy's fond hopes. Taking pity on him, I lent Freddy a few gentles, and did not press the matter of a visible rise in our flour and bread bill, which my wife unhesitatingly attributed to Freddy's liberality in the matter of bait in general and ground-bait in particular. Cheese, too, I learned, had gone in chunks for weird baits, and honey had been successfully begged to make a special brand of paste deadly enough to kill fish at a mile. But a stand had been made when it came to broaching cherished stores of bottled fruit to provide cherries for chub, and Freddy had retired discomfited.

For days Freddy fished without making any decided impression on the number of fish in the river, and I began to think he would admit the superiority of my method after all. The fish he caught were small—"not sizable" is, I think, the correct technical term—and, except one or two he reserved for live bait, the remainder of his catch was promptly returned to the river. Returned with care,

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too, for dear old Freddy never gave needless pain to any living thing, and it was something of a sight to see his strong, muscular fingers grasping firmly yet gently a two-inch roachlet as, more in sorrow than in anger, Freddy withdrew the hook as gently and carefully as a man might pull a splinter from under his own thumb-nail. But the skill of the man was merely latent, just waiting for a chance to show itself. This came one evening when, rod in hand, he paused to dwell with heavy comment on my beloved gudgeonry. Feeding time was due, and without a thought of evil I cast forth my crusts as usual to feed my multitude of fishes.



"NOT SIZABLE."

Freddy gazed eagerly as the crusts disappeared. He was thinking—"plotting" would be a better word—"diabolically" the only word to follow—and the very next day saw his fell scheme at work. It meant making a path between two flower-beds in front of the house, climbing a fence decorated with barbed wire, and extemporizing an amazingly insecure and uncomfortable perch on the knotty poll of an ancient willow which leaned over the water. From this vantage-point, armed with a fly-rod and the finest of tackle, Freddy dabbled cubes of dry crust on the surface as evening fell. The tiniest of hooks ever seen lay buried in those tempting fragments of honest loaf, and from my seat I saw a line oft tightened, a rod too seldom straight, and heard the sullen splash of the landing-net oft repeated, realizing the while that, all unwittingly, I was in bitter truth an accessory before the fact.

"Something like sport at last," said Freddy, as he displayed a full score of roach and dace, real beauties, with deep green backs, fins tinged with crimson, and glistening silver sides—but all too stiff in death for my liking. Evening after evening he repeated his skilful angling with varying success, but never without "bagging a few," as he expressed it. Once, and the occasion filled me with unholy joy, the gnats got hold of Freddy, and, in spite of language which set a pensioned hunter in the meadow opposite galloping madly, the gnats won and fairly drove Freddy from his tree for that evening. But he returned smeared with stinking stuff

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to keep off the gnats, and took his toll of my finny friends with unrelenting skill and success. No longer did I cast my bread upon the waters as the sun sank low, but sat silent and glum, hoping the tree would fall into the river. The climax came late one evening, when, just as I was drawing the final puffs from my last pipe for the night, a mighty shout arose from Freddy.

"Come quickly, man!" he cried. "Quick, quick!" he repeated, insistently, his voice quivering with suppressed excitement. "I've got the daddy roach of the river. I'll play him up into the shallows on the left near the ford. You get the net under him. Come on; look alive! Be quick; I cannot play him all night!"

He might have played that fish until the crack of doom but for a sudden thought which made me spring from my chair so quickly that Don flew after me with a sharp bark, wondering what mischief it could be which had stirred his master to such unwonted activity. Quicker than I had moved for years, I dashed to the foot of the tree, ran on a couple of steps, and plunged into the water up to my knees, grabbing the landing-net as I ran. In the dim afterglow I saw a line, thin as a spider's thread, stretched taut away to my left, and at the end something big was flopping and squirming in little more than a foot of water. On I splashed through the running stream, and as the fish turned I saw how big it was, and I also saw a familiar scar across its struggling form. That was Willie, poor thing, fighting for dear life at the end of that line. I made a vicious jab with the landing-net, and felt a slight check as the iron struck the light gut cast well above the fish. Then an empty line, shattered and sundered, flew upward, a bent rod straightened, and the language from that tree simply sizzled past me and made the water feel distinctly warm around my legs. Never mind, Willie flopped away to safety all right.



"I MADE A VICIOUS JAB WITH THE LANDING-NET."

But I never saw him or William again, and it seemed to me as if the passing shoals of roach were fewer and swam with set purpose farther from my platform. Even my gudgeon-fishing lost its elusive charm, for I was never free from the haunting fear that Freddy would capture Willie or William, perhaps both, when I was too far away to save. Thus did Freddy's skill kill my sport. He does not live with me now, but if he returns again any fishing time I mean to festoon that tree with barbed wire and decorate it with broken glass and steel spikes. If Willie and William return I will cut that tree down without mercy, in case Freddy or some other skilful angler should use it again, in spite of barb, glass, and spike, as a vantage-point from which to make that skilful sport which kills my sport.

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A CHILDREN'S STORY.

By VIOLET M. METHLEY.

Illustrated by H. R. Millar.

PETER had been exceedingly naughty; there is no doubt about that. All day his badness went on getting worse and worse, as it does if you don't try to stop it at first. He began by throwing Gwen's doll into the bath, and he ended by biting Nurse's hand when she tried to give him a powder in a spoonful of jam.

Peter knew quite well that the powder did not taste nearly bad enough for a big boy of ten to make a fuss about. All the same, he bit Nurse and knocked the spoon out of her hand, so that the jam spoilt her clean apron.

Nurse did not say much, but she looked as though she could if she wished, which always makes one feel uncomfortable.

"*Very* well, Master Peter," she remarked. "I sha'n't trouble to give you another powder. You may just have as good a night as you can."

She finished putting Peter to bed without once speaking, and left him tucked up tightly, with a night-light burning in the wash-basin and throwing a round patch of light on the ceiling.

Peter ought to have been quite comfortable, but somehow he wasn't. He felt naughty inside and outside and altogether; hot and dried-up and horrid. He wanted a drink out of the water-bottle, but it was too much bother to get it, and he felt sure that Nurse would be more offended than ever if he called her. First he threw off the bedclothes, then he pulled them up again. Next he turned towards the window, then he rolled over, facing the door, which was open just a little.

Something bobbed round it, quick in and quick out, something which was round and just about the shape and size of a kitten's head.

Peter rubbed his eyes and stared; he was really not quite sure for a minute that he had seen anything at all. He waited and waited, until his eyelids were quite tired and began to shut by themselves. And suddenly underneath the edges of them he saw something for certain.

A head peeped slowly round the door, a body followed it, and a tiny man came tiptoeing across the floor towards Peter's bed.

He was about a foot high and altogether round. His head was like one ball, and his body a bigger one. He had round, sticking-out ears, and his eyes and his nose and his mouth were all round too. He was dressed in bright yellow clothes, which fitted him as tightly as a sausage-skin, and he wore a little yellow cap.

The tiny man came across the floor, stepping very softly on the tips of his yellow toes, and he jumped straight up on to the chair by the bed, so that he was just on a level with Peter's face.

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All this time the little boy kept as still as a mouse, even holding his breath, because he did not want to frighten the queer creature away. He only peeped under his eyelashes to see what happened.

The round man came quite close to Peter, grinning so widely that the corners of his mouth were out of sight behind his head. Then he pulled out a tiny sword, with the sharpest of sharp points, and Peter thought it was time to open his eyes wide.

"What do you want?" he asked.

The little man nearly fell off the chair in his surprise.

"Oh, you're awake!" he said, with great disgust, in a squeaky voice. "What a pity! What a dreadful pity!"

He stamped both his little feet angrily, and then turned to jump down. But Peter sat up in bed, very wide awake indeed.

"Why is it a pity?" he asked.

"Because it doesn't give me a chance," said the tiny man, pettishly. "You *ought* to have been asleep. What do you think I am here for?"

"I don't know a bit," said Peter, which was quite true.

"And I'm not going to tell you!" said the round man, very crossly. "Good-bye. *Perhaps* I shall come back after you are asleep."

"Then I sha'n't see you," Peter said.

"No; you'll only feel me. Ha-ha-ha!" The little man chuckled and slid down the chair-leg to the floor.

But Peter was determined that he should not go like that, and he jumped out of bed in a great hurry.

"Oh, please tell me why you came and what your name is?" he begged. "I—I won't let you go till you say."

The round man stopped short, looking up at Peter with his round head on one side.

"Really, you are most annoying!" he grumbled. "My name is Fancy, if you want to know, and I am a very busy person. There's a great deal of work to be done to-night, and I can't waste time here, especially as you've no right to be awake at all. But I'll tell you what: you can come with me on my rounds—that will teach you a lesson or two, I expect."

"I'd love to!" cried Peter.

"*Would* you?" Fancy said, and somehow Peter did not feel quite so sure. But of course he could not show that he was rather frightened before such a little tiny man as that.

"It's going to be a lot of trouble to me," Fancy grumbled. "You're much too big, for one thing."

"Well, I can't help that," Peter said.

"Yes, you can!" snapped the little man. "Don't be so silly! Just shut your eyes and say 'I want to be smaller' seven times over, backwards, without taking breath. Now—one, two, three—go!"

Peter managed to do it at last, but just try it yourself and see how difficult it is. He opened his eyes and found himself exactly the same height as Fancy. It was so funny to see all the furniture high above his head that he would have liked to wait, but the little man was in a tremendous hurry.

"Come along, and don't keep me here!" he cried. "Quick, up the chimney!"

Before Peter had time to think that it would be difficult they were scrambling up the bars of the grate on to the hob, where there was just room for them to stand.

"Do exactly like me," the little man said. "Hold your breath—so—and——" As he spoke he shot straight up the chimney, so that the rest of his sentence came from far away in the distance. "Follow me—so!"

Peter stood up straight, just as the other had done, and up he shot through the chimney, like a pea through a pea-shooter. He had no time to be frightened before he found himself at the top, sitting on the edge of the chimney-pot with Fancy beside him.

All round him were roofs and roofs and roofs—those of his own house and all the other houses in the street. It was almost as light as day, because the moon was full, and there on the tiles beside them a horse was pawing and champing.

It was coal-black, with a long, flowing mane and tail, and the insides of its nostrils were very red.

"Whoa, my beauty!" Fancy cried, and then, just as he was going to jump on to its back, he stopped, looking very cross. "Oh, bother, I suppose I must call one for you!" he said, and blew a little whistle five times.

"Once for a taxi, twice for a hansom, three times for a four-wheeler, four for an aeroplane, five for a Nightmare—that's how it goes now," he remarked, as another coal-black horse came galloping over the house-tops.

"Are these Nightmares, then?" Peter asked, doubtfully.

"Of course they are!" the little man answered. "What else do you suppose one rides on at night? Get up—quick!"

And Peter was obliged to clamber up and hold on as best he could.

Away they went, clatter-clatter over the tiles, so fast that it quite took away the little boy's breath.

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"Where are we going?" he managed to gasp at last.

"Let me see——" Fancy said, pulling out a little note-book. "What are my appointments for to-night? Master Peter Percival—that's you. Master Thomas Simpson, Number one hundred and fifty-three, Elgin Park Square, that's the next—and here we are!"

As he spoke, he pulled up the Nightmare beside a high chimney-stack and clambered up to the edge of a pot, followed by Peter. Down he dived, and the little boy followed, for funnily enough he had left off being frightened by now.

to imagine. Fancy hopped up on to the bed, and began reading out of his little note-book.

"'Master Thomas Simpson hit his little brother and made his nose bleed, kicked the cat, and ate two pounds of mixed peel, which he stole from the store-cupboard, for his supper. Went to bed without saying that he was sorry.' Aha, my young friend, there's no mistake here! You'll be sorry before I've done with you. I'll give you bad dreams! You shall have a Nightmare! Come on, my beauty!"

Down the chimney the black horse rattled and clattered, and stood pawing at the blue tiles. Then Fancy mounted on its back and began riding backwards and forwards, up and down, and to and fro over the little boy who lay in bed.



"FANCY MOUNTED ON ITS BACK AND BEGAN RIDING BACKWARDS AND FORWARDS, UP AND DOWN, AND TO AND FRO OVER THE LITTLE BOY WHO LAY IN BED."

In the fireplace Peter was nearly smothered in a pile of those curly shavings which people sometimes put into grates in the summer. When he managed to crawl out, he found himself in a splendidly-furnished bedroom, where a little boy of about his own age was asleep.

He was lying on his back, snoring, with his mouth wide open, and, even in his sleep, he looked about as disagreeable as it is possible

The unfortunate Master Thomas Simpson groaned and muttered and turned and twisted, but the more he struggled the more Fancy laughed and shouted and prodded him with his sharp little sword.

At last the miserable little boy opened his eyes with a great howl of pain, and at the same instant Fancy jumped down off the bed



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and caught Peter's hand. "Come on!" he cried. "That job's done!"

Next moment all three of them were on the roof once more, quite out of breath with haste, although Fancy was chuckling and laughing as though he would never stop.

"Now do you understand what my business is?" he asked.

"I suppose you give bad dreams," Peter answered.

"Yes; bad dreams and nightmares and everything that is unpleasant to all the boys and girls who deserve them! If they go to bed without saying they're sorry, you see what they have to expect. Oh, it's just as well that you were awake, after being so naughty all day, I can tell you!"

"But if they're sorry before they go to sleep, you can't do anything, can you?" Peter asked, anxiously.

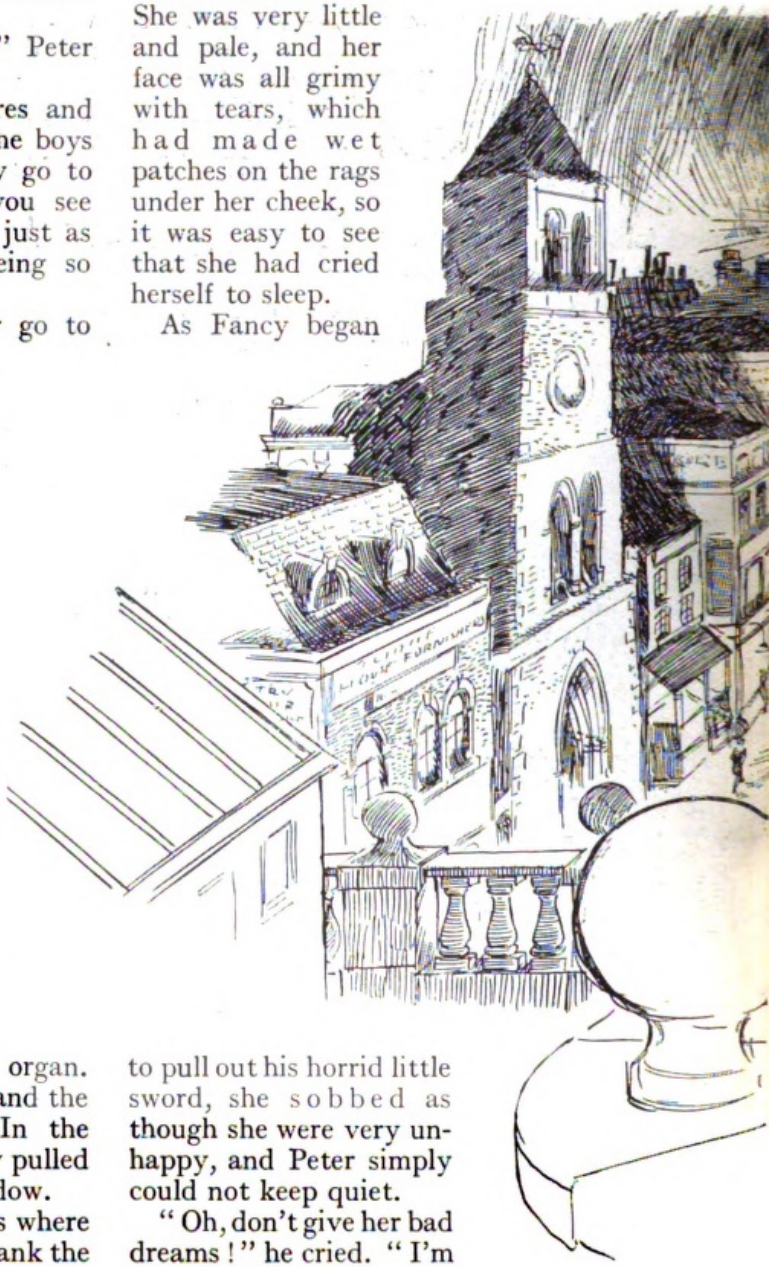
"No, I can't—and very disappointing that is! I miss a lot of fun because children are so apt to get good at bedtime. Now, where's our next appointment? 'Pollie Perkins, Tiger Lane'—come along!"

Away they clattered again, faster and faster. Sometimes the Nightmares took huge leaps from house-top to house-top, sometimes they raced along on the edges of parapets, so that Peter could look down into the streets far below. The noise of motors and trams and people all talking together came up to them, but quite faintly, because the houses were so very high. They were a long way from Peter's home now, and all around them were hundreds and hundreds of telegraph and telephone wires, humming and buzzing in the wind, with a noise rather like an organ.

Then the houses began to get lower and the streets much darker and quieter. In the darkest and quietest of them all Fancy pulled up his Nightmare, before an attic window.

"Here we are!" he cried. "This is where Pollie Perkins lives. Let me see: 'Drank the baby's milk, and told her mother it was the cat. Pulled the baby's hair because it cried, and went to bed without saying she was sorry.' Aha! Here's a bad, wicked girl! She shall have the worst dreams I can give her. We'll go in by the window this time."

It was easy enough to do that, because almost all the panes were broken and just stuffed up with pieces of dirty rag. Inside, it was quite a different room from Master Thomas Simpson's. Instead of a lovely soft carpet, there were only bare boards, with blackbeetles scuttling to and fro, and the only beds were two piles of straw and rags, with a woman lying on one and a little girl on the other. Fancy went creeping towards her on the very tips of his yellow toes, and Peter followed him.



She was very little and pale, and her face was all grimy with tears, which had made wet patches on the rags under her cheek, so it was easy to see that she had cried herself to sleep.

As Fancy began to pull out his horrid little sword, she sobbed as though she were very unhappy, and Peter simply could not keep quiet.

"Oh, don't give her bad dreams!" he cried. "I'm sure she is sorry!"

"I don't care about that!" the little round man answered. "*My* only business is that she was very naughty yesterday and that she went to sleep without saying that she was sorry. Nothing else matters!"

"I do think you're horrid!" Peter cried, indignantly. "Wouldn't you rather people were sorry?"

"Oh, dear, no!" Fancy answered. "I should have nothing to do then, except wait

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for children who had been greedy over supper, and think how dull that would be! Now, please don't waste any more of my precious time."

But Peter could bear no more. He clambered up on to the pile of rags and began to shake the little girl by the shoulder with all his might and main.

"Wake up!" he cried. "Oh, do wake up and say you're sorry!"

It was then that Peter discovered what a bother it was to have grown so *very* small. He could scarcely make any more noise than a mouse, and the little girl did not seem to feel his tugs at all. And all the time Fancy was dancing up and down beside him in a perfect fury.

"How dare you interfere!" he cried. "Oh, *you'll* be sorry for this!"

But, although he screamed and shouted and prodded Peter with his sword, the little boy took no notice. He seized a lock of the girl's hair and pulled it with all his strength, so that at last she opened her eyes and blinked about her. And almost directly she began to cry again.



"SOMETIMES THE NIGHTMARES TOOK HUGE LEAPS FROM HOUSE-TOP TO HOUSE-TOP, SOMETIMES THEY RACED ALONG ON THE EDGES OF PARAPETS."

"Oh, dear, oh, dear!" she whispered. "I must tell mother I'm sorry!"

She scrambled up, almost knocking Peter down in her haste, and ran across the room to the other pile of rags.

"Do wake up, mother!" she sobbed, and the woman sat up at once, whilst the little girl went on speaking. "I was that naughty, an' I couldn't go to sleep comfortable till I'd told you. I did take baby's milk, an' I hit 'im when 'e cried; but I was that 'ungry! Oh, I'm sorry. I won't do it again!"

"That's my good Pollie!" the woman said, lovingly, and she put both her arms round the little girl. "There—there; it's all right now, dearie. You just cuddle down and go to sleep with mother!"

Peter had quite forgotten everything else in watching them, but now a voice from the window startled him.

"Good-bye, my interfering young friend! You may just find your own way home!"

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The little boy turned round in time to see Fancy's yellow legs disappearing over the sill.

Peter ran to the window and scrambled out on to the leads, but there was not the faintest sign to be seen of the little round man or the two Nightmares; they had vanished absolutely and entirely.

So there was poor Peter, all alone upon the roofs in the middle of the night, miles and miles from his own home, and with not the tiniest idea how to get there.

It would have been bad enough to be so far away, down in the streets below, with people to talk to; but here, up on the roofs, which all looked exactly alike—well, I don't know what you think, but I really cannot imagine anything much worse.

Peter stumbled along in the rain-water gutter, crying. He was quite a brave boy in ordinary daylight, but now there seemed to be nothing else to do. Perhaps it was because he was so unordinarily small.

Suddenly a voice spoke out of a pipe which he was just passing, and startled him so much that he nearly fell off the roof. "Why are you making that horrible noise?" it said. "And what do you want here?"

"Please, I only want to get home," Peter answered.

"Well, *I* don't know where your home is!" the voice answered, angrily. "Go away at once—you're waking the children. It's easy to see you don't know what it is to be a sparrow with four babies all crying for food at once, the first thing in the morning. Go away, or I'll come out and peck you!"

And Peter ran on as fast as he could, feeling more miserable than ever.

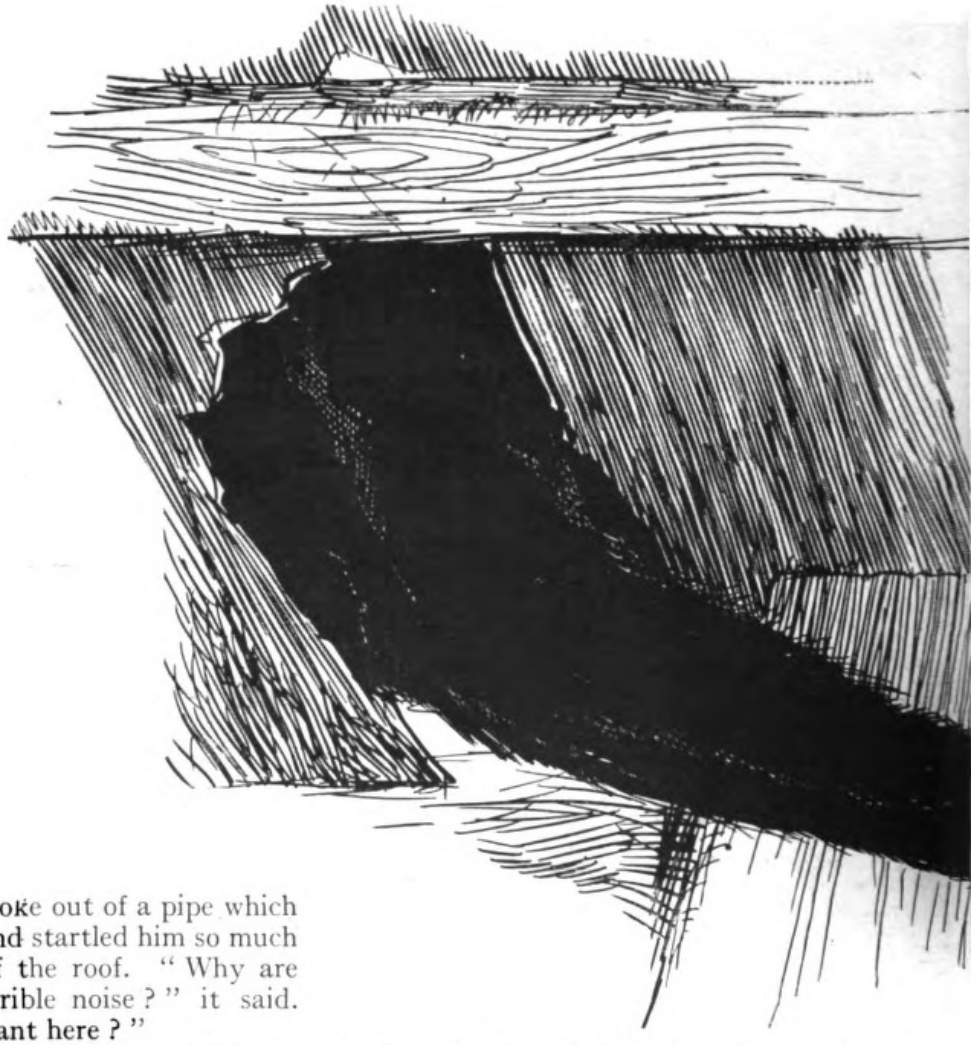
But worse was to come.

He was just sliding down a sloping roof very slowly and carefully when he saw a most terrible animal coming along the parapet towards him, with great green eyes which glittered in the moonlight.

It was as large as a tiger and very much the same shape, but instead of being striped it was all coal-black. And as it came softly along it gave a growling roar.

"E-ee-a-ow!"

Peter knew quite well what it must be. He had seen the pictures and read the stories



in the "Jungle Book" about Bagheera, the Black Panther. Of course, this was a black panther.

The little boy slid down the roof much faster than he had meant to. He turned round and ran along the gutter at the top of his speed, and he heard the great beast following him, with a "pad-pad—pad-pad."

Peter looked wildly about for somewhere to hide, and he saw a small hole under a broken slate. He crept into it, making himself as small as possible, and hoping that the dreadful beast would not notice where he had gone.

But he was not to escape like that. An

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instant later he heard it roaring outside: "E-ee-a-ow! E-ee-aa-ow!" And then there came a low, rumbling growl which was very frightening. Peter's hiding-place grew quite dark, and he knew that the terrible creature was pressed close to it. And then came the most frightful moment of all.

He saw the moonlight through the opening of the hole for a minute, and then a huge black paw was pushed in and began feeling about. Peter crushed himself together in one corner, but it was no use. The paw felt and felt until it touched him.

The great white hooked claws caught him by his blue pyjamas and dragged him out on to the roof. He saw the panther's huge, furry face with its bristling whiskers and fierce yellow eyes; and then Peter saw something else.

Round the panther's neck was a red collar with silver bells, a collar exactly like the one which belonged to his own cat, Nigger.

Then Peter understood. It was just his silly size, you see, for the dreadful monster was only dear old Nigger, purring and mewing as usual, only his voice sounded so terribly big.



"THE PAW FELT AND FELT UNTIL IT TOUCHED HIM."

Peter was so delighted that he put his two arms round Nigger's neck—although they didn't nearly meet—and snuggled into the soft warm fur.

"Oh, puss, puss, I am so glad it's you!" he cried.

And the black cat purred and arched his back and rubbed his great head against Peter's head, and said:—

"B-rr-ooo! B-rrrr-ooo!"

The little boy was not a bit frightened any longer; he knew quite well that Nigger would take him home. Cats know just as much about roofs as we do about streets, and they scarcely ever lose their way. Besides, Peter felt sure that Nigger had followed him on purpose.

He scrambled up on to the soft, black, furry back of the cat, and sat holding on by the red collar. They set off along the housetops very smoothly and softly, pad-pad—pad-pad.

It was quite different to that mad ride on the Nightmare. Peter grew comfortably drowsy and his head fell forward between Nigger's velvety ears. He must have been sound asleep, for he never knew whether they went in by the chimney or the window, so I don't know, either.

Anyhow, Peter woke up to find himself in bed, with his arms round the black cat's neck and his face pressed into the soft fur. It was still quite dark and there in the doorway stood Nurse, with the light of a candle showing red all through the outside edges of her fingers.

The little boy scrambled up in a great hurry, upsetting Nigger.

"Oh, Nurse, I'm so glad you've come!" he cried. "I *was* so afraid of going to sleep without saying I was sorry for being so naughty and biting you."

"Why, there, Master Peter, you mustn't take on like that," Nurse said, and she came and kissed him and tucked him up in bed very kindly. "You go to sleep now, like a good boy, and don't worry any more."

But Peter tried to explain, and Nurse quite understood, for whatever he told her she answered:—

"Just Fancy, Master Peter!"

Which, of course, was quite true.

And mother understood too, when Peter told her all about his adventures next day. She didn't laugh at him at all, but stroked his hair gently and said:—

"It was just Fancy, dearie—just Fancy."

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# ANNOUNCEMENTS

The AUGUST NUMBER will, as usual, be a

## SPECIAL FICTION NUMBER

containing, amongst others, stories by the following famous writers:

**Stepping Backwards - - - - - - W. W. JACOBS**
**A Lesson to Lionel Cutts - - E PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM**
**Looping the Loop - - - - - - RICHARD MARSH**
**Cuthbertson's Exhibition - - E. TEMPLE THURSTON**
**The Episode of the Exiled Monarch - - C. H. BOVILL and P. G. WODEHOUSE**

In this number will appear the first of two articles describing

## Dr. Mawson's Terrible Journey

in which Dr. Mawson will tell for the first time in detail the story of his thrilling experience in the Antarctic regions, in the course of which both his companions lost their lives and he himself, after perhaps the most terrific perils out of which any adventurer has ever escaped alive, was just able to reach safety. These articles will be fully illustrated by some most remarkable photographs and by drawings made under Dr. Mawson's personal supervision.

*Amongst the other articles will be founa*

**The Latest Methods of Tracking Criminals**
**How to Improve Your Batting 50 per Cent. - J. B. HOBBS**
**Jottings from My Diary - - - LILLAH McCARTHY**
**"As Funny as They Can" - - By Well-Known Comic Artists**

In the September number we shall commence the publication of the

## New Sherlock Holmes Serial

In this story, which will run through the magazine for some months, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle has provided his readers with as much thrilling incident and excitement as they enjoyed in the case of the last Sherlock Holmes serial—"The Hound of the Baskervilles."

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# CURIOSITIES.

[*We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.*]



### A WELL-DECORATED TOTEM-TREE.

HERE is a photograph of my totem-tree, at Barbers' Corners, Southern Cayuga County. It was carved out of the trunk and lower branches of a good-sized tree in the summers of 1911 and 1912 by George E. Carr, a soldier of the Civil War of 1861 and 1865. There are in all thirty-two figures carved on all sides, consisting of animals, birds, portraits, etc. This totem-tree is about eighteen feet high, and is viewed by numerous strangers, who pause to give it more than a passing notice.—Mr. George E. Carr, Union Springs, Cayuga County, New York.

### ELEPHANT *v.* MOTOR-CAR.

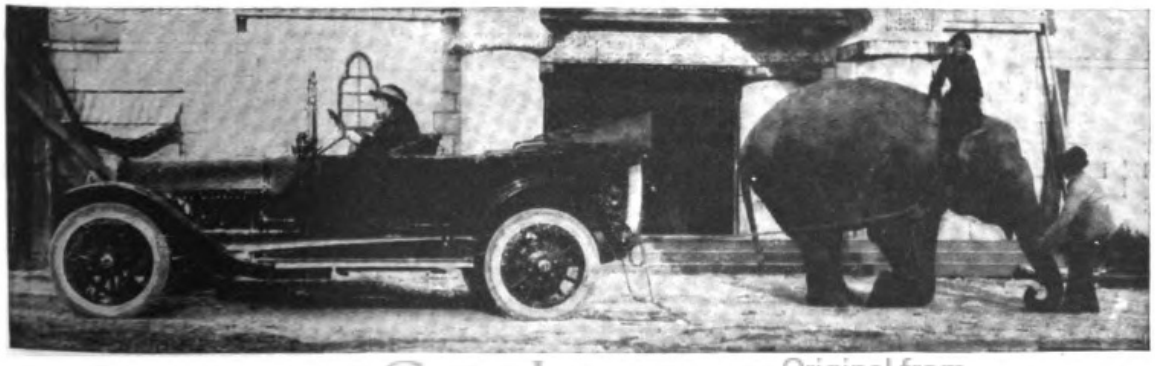
WHAT happens when an elephant and a modern six-cylinder car enter into active competition is shown in this contest between a Buick six and an elephant that is owned by a Los Angeles moving-picture concern. In the first heat the elephant dragged the car backward; in the second the car caught the pachyderm off his guard and pulled it to its knees. In order to save the reputation of the huge quadruped, the third heat was omitted, the contest declared a draw, and all parties were satisfied.—Mr. C. L. Edholm, 4,624, Figueroa Street, Los Angeles, California, U.S.A.

### BIRDS' NESTS THAT LOOK LIKE FRUIT.

MANY persons at first sight would immediately say that the tree in this photograph was bearing fruit, but what appear to be fruit are only the homes of a number of small birds known as the black-throated weaver. These small birds are of a bright yellow colour with black heads and throats—hence their name—and build their nests in a very peculiar manner. The nests are made of dried coarse grass, all woven together



like a ball, and entrance is effected through a small hole in the bottom. These birds, curiously enough, build in one tree—generally near a habitation—and the other trees of the same kind in the immediate vicinity have not a single nest in them. The writer counted about fifty nests in this one particular tree. The foliage of the tree chosen by these birds as their nesting-place suffers in a remarkable manner (as will be seen from the photograph), but luckily few trees are chosen, owing to the vast number of birds building in one tree.—Mr. Herbert H. Edis, Ibadan, Southern Nigeria, West Africa.



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## A FRUIT LITTLE KNOWN IN ENGLAND.

I AM sending you a photograph which will give your readers a good idea of the "bread fruit tree." This fruit grows to enormous dimensions, sometimes as much as three feet in diameter, and the dog up the tree enables one to realize its size. They are green in colour, sometimes brown if overripe. The natives gather them in, and when opened and cooked they are very sweet to the taste, but of a sweetness that is rather too pronounced for European tastes. When open they are somewhat disagreeable to smell, being very sickly. I have often eaten them myself when in the jungle, and



far away from dinner, home, and all that sort of thing, but only then. They grow on the trunk only, and appear foreign to the tree when seen by anyone for the first time. Their weight, full grown, scales as much as six to seven pounds. The season for harvesting them is just before the monsoons begin, somewhere about June or the end of May. They fetch from four to six annas each in the bazaars, according to their weight and soundness.—Mr. Thomas E. Long, 64th Company Royal Garrison Artillery, Cantonments, Rangoon.

## REMARKABLE FOSTER-MOTHER.

KIT is the name of a remarkable cat possessed by Mrs. Howard, who lives in Bentinck Street, St. Helens. Kit is remarkable in more ways than one,



but perhaps the most remarkable of her qualities is her fondness for newly-hatched chickens and goslings. In fact, she acts as a foster-mother to the fowl, and has brought up five hatches without the slightest complaint. While the mother hen is busy with her hatching, and when, say, half of the chicks have begun to show themselves, Kit takes a hand, so to speak, and, conveying the chicks in her mouth, as tenderly as any human being could carry them, she puts them in her sleeping-box, and nestles them with warmth until they are able to run about. It is related that recently, while out for a walk at the rear of the houses, Kit heard the cries of a chicken in distress, and discovered that one belonging to a neighbour had got astray. Without any ceremony Kit picked up the chick in her mouth and took it home, much to the alarm of the owner, who thought pussie was going to make a meal of it. It is an extraordinary sight to see Kit lying on the heath-rug with half-a-dozen chickens nestling close to her fur. Nine years ago Mrs. Howard rescued Kit from some boys who were going to drown her, and since then she has been run over by a cart and mangled by a spring trap; but in spite of this she bears her age well.—Mr. T. Duxbury, St. Helens.

## Solution of Last Month's Bridge Problem.

| A | Y | B | Z |
|---|---|---|---|
| Hearts king | Hearts 2 | Spades 2 | Hearts 7 |
| Hearts queen | Hearts 5 | Diamonds 4 ! ! | Hearts 10 |
| Diamonds 3 ! | Diamonds 9 | Clubs 3 | Diamonds 2 |
| Clubs 2 | Spades knave | Spades 4 | Diamonds 7 |
| Diamonds 6 ! | Diamonds 10 | Clubs 4 | Diamonds 8 |
| Clubs queen | Spades queen | Spades 5 | Clubs 7 |
| Diamonds kve. | Diamonds qn. | Spades 8 | Clubs 8 |
| Clubs 6 | Hearts 9 | Clubs 5 | Clubs king ! |
| Hearts 6 | Hearts knave | Clubs 10 | Clubs 9 |
| Diamonds ace | Diamonds king | Clubs ace | Clubs knave |

The winning card in each trick is underlined.
If at trick two B does not play his four of diamonds, the problem cannot be solved.

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"'THESE CARDS,' HE SAID, SLOWLY, THAT THE WORDS SHOULD SINK IN, 'ARE MINE.'"

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(*See page* 128.)

THE STRAND MAGAZINE

Vol. xlviii. AUGUST, 1914. No. 284.

# The RANKER

BY FRANK E. VERNEY

*Illustrated By*

Christopher Clarke R.I.

TAYLOR entered the Colonel's quarters to the clamouring throb and skirl of the regimental drums and fifes beating tattoo on the adjacent barrack-square. At the soft clash of his spurs in the carpeted hall a door opened swiftly, and a girl stood on the threshold. Colour flamed in her face, and her dark eyes gleamed wonderfully as she looked at him.

"Gerry," she said, quietly, "I shall be here—waiting—for his answer. You'll come and tell me before you go?"

"You may be sure of that, dear," he answered.

She was gone back into the room as the butler came forward. Taylor was shown straight into his commanding officer's room.

"Lieutenant Taylor to see you, sir," announced the butler.

"Good evening, Taylor. I did not expect to see you this side mess. Anything wrong?"

The faint surprise in his commanding officer's tone brought a touch of grimness to Taylor's face. It reminded him that this was his first informal visit to his Colonel's private house.

"No, there's nothing wrong, sir," he answered. "I've come to see you on a personal matter—if you can give me a few minutes."

The Colonel motioned him to a chair. Taylor ignored the chair, and went and stood upon the black rug in front of his senior officer.

"Helen has promised to marry me," he said, simply. "Last night—at a dance. I've come to ask you for your consent."

For half a minute the Colonel regarded him in astonished silence.

"You want to marry my daughter?" he repeated, slowly.

Again there was a tense pause.

"Taylor," said the Colonel, at last, abruptly, "I'm sorry, but it is impossible."

For several seconds the two men faced each other in silence—Taylor, tall and lean, with grim, square-cut face, resolute and incisive as a modern cavalry sabre; Lieutenant-colonel Finch-Skye, slight of build, grey-haired, delicately-featured, reminiscent of an ancient rapier.

"Will you kindly tell me, sir," asked Taylor, quietly, "why it is impossible for an officer of 'Ours' to marry his Colonel's daughter?"

The Colonel got up from his chair, stepped across to the low mantelpiece, and very slowly pressed out the glowing end of his cigarette upon a crested ash-tray. When he turned again to his subaltern officer his manner was aloof and cold—the parade manner of the officer commanding the most exclusive cavalry regiment in the service.

"Taylor," he said, slowly, "you a·



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certainly an officer of mine—now; but you were not always that. It is one thing to be admitted into the mess; it is another to marry my daughter."

Taylor's clean-cut face hardened slightly, and his bronzed skin glowed redly against the white collar-edge that bordered the gold braid of his scarlet mess-jacket. He knew perfectly well that his admittance to the mess as a substantive officer in the regiment which had seen him swilling out stables and doing guards as a trooper would never have been attained but for the hazard which gave the previous tenure of command to an officer whose sense of proportion was strong enough to override the mess fetish of caste. He had not high birth to jump the gulf. He was a quartermaster's son. The allowance which enabled him to accept his commission came from his father's brother, a tradesman.

"Do you mean that because I am a ranker you will not let me marry Helen?" he asked.

"Not because you are a ranker," answered the Colonel, tersely, "but because you belong to the ranks—are of the ranks."

It was the answer Taylor had expected, yet his mind flamed fiercely at its injustice.

"In what respect, sir, am I inferior or different from my brother officers because of that?" he asked, quickly, but with disciplined restraint. "Am I lacking in the mess—at my work—in the playing-fields—in brain, body, or speech?"

"It's nothing of that sort," answered the Colonel. "If it were, you would not have remained in the mess. I've no fault to find with your appearance or your manners, and I've the greatest respect for your abilities as an officer. I admit that your success and adaptability have astonished me, and justified the late commanding officer's unprecedented departure. But these things are more or less superficial. They can be made. The other things which I expect in my daughter's husband cannot be made."

"What are those things?" asked Taylor.

"What are they?" repeated the Colonel, almost impatiently. "They cannot be described—like the points of a charger. But, for instance, there is this matter of the Staff College. You are the first officer of the Sixth Lancers to enter. You've passed in First—a considerable distinction. Very creditable, very—but in 'Ours' it has always been an unwritten rule for an officer to sacrifice personal advancement, and remain always with his regiment. In that kind of thing—stupid, no doubt, to your point of view—lies the great difference."

"I think you are condemning me unfairly in that, sir," replied Taylor. "Counting against me a thing which is the greatest honour and credit throughout the service simply because it is fashionable in 'Ours' to mark time on the regimental list."

"You evidently don't understand," observed the Colonel; "but I cannot expect you to."

"Are you going to sacrifice Helen's happiness for a mere idea—a prejudice?"

"Mr. Taylor," said the Colonel, coldly, "I've known my daughter long enough to know what she requires in her husband. Your personality has no doubt fascinated her; but her democratic and modern ideas will not be allowed to go so far as you wish. That is final."

As the last word left the Colonel's lips a faint sound came from the doorway. Both men swung round on their spurred heels. Helen was standing in the room, her eyes gleaming passionately.

"Father!" she cried, "how can you—oh! how can you say such things?"

She walked swiftly across the room to Taylor, and stretched out her lovely arms to him. The Colonel stared speechlessly.

"Gerry," she said, softly, but proudly, "I will never marry anyone but you. I love you more than anything."

Taylor bent and kissed the outstretched hands.

"I know, dear," he said, gaily, but unsteadily. "The Colonel and I were just—talking."

"I heard," she said, with the break of tears in her voice. "I couldn't wait."

She turned swiftly to her father, and stood in front of him and put her hands upon his slender shoulders.

"Dad," she appealed, "Gerry is everything to me. You wouldn't have me miserable for ever?"

Taylor saw the Colonel's steely-grey eyes blaze suddenly with a tenderness that surprised him. But it was only for a moment.

"Helen," he answered, gently but firmly, "if you heard what I said you will know that it is impossible. You must let me know what is best for you."

She drew her hands from his shoulders and turned and went to Taylor's side.

"Father," she said, "I will never marry anyone but Gerry, and I would marry him, if he would have me, if he were still a private soldier."

With a tremendous effort Taylor restrained an impulse to take her in his arms.

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"You are talking nonsense," said the Colonel. "Please go to your room."

"Father," she answered, steadily, "if I cannot marry Gerry with your consent, I will do so without."

For a half minute the Colonel stood looking at them, and then he went to his writing-table, upon which stood two photographs, one of his son, a brother officer of Taylor's, the other of Helen. He lifted up the latter picture.

"If you did a thing of that sort," he said, sternly, "you would go out of my life like that."

With an oddly dramatic gesture he placed the photograph face downwards upon the table.

## II.

TAYLOR went through mess that night in a frame of mind which shocked his subconscious self with a sense of sacrilege. For the first time in his life he felt himself apart and detached from the scene. He was like a man sitting in the midst of a family from which he had suddenly and unjustly been outcast—a family he had loved and worshipped, but now saw with coldly analytic eyes, bitter eyes, warped for the time by the words of the little grey officer sitting proudly opposite the great gold trophy in the centre of the table—words which told him that though he sat there as part of that gallant assembly, he was *not* part of it. And then, like a mighty theme in wild, disordered music, Helen's pride in him and love for him swept through his battling thoughts, and again the sweet fragrance and faith of her brought back an eddy of normality.

His fibres began to respond, as they always did, to the surrounding atmosphere. It was his turn as vice-president. After the last course was cleared he sat staring down the long length of gleaming damask to where the right hand of the mess president was fidgeting with the glittering crystal stopper of the decanter which had just finished its circuit of the table.

Above the untroubled roll of conversation and the clear but controlled laughter of some junior subalterns, beat the inspiriting music of the regimental band.

Taylor suddenly withdrew his spurred heel from beneath the table. The mess president had clutched the heavy glass stopper.

Rat-tat! Immediate silence answered the double impact.

"Mr. Vice!" called the mess president.

Taylor rose and lifted a rubied glass. Spurs jingled jerkily as every man followed his example.

"Gentlemen, the King!" Taylor's voice rang, and the brass music of the band flung out the national verse.

At the end of the last moving note the response came low and steady from every throat, "The King! God bless him!" and the toast was drunk.

A man on Taylor's right, who was wearing the mess kit of the Gordons, took out a cigarette.

"We have another toast yet," remarked Taylor.

"Oh, Lord—thanks! I'd forgotten your custom."

Down the room Colonel Finch-Skye rose to his feet and raised his glass.

In silence every officer did likewise.

"Gentlemen! The Regiment!"

And then, to the galloping lilt of the regimental march, matches scraped here and there to the commanding officer's lead, and blue smoke began to curl up to the great lamps.

The Gordon Highlander turned to Taylor.

"You're about the only regiment in the service with that toast as a regular thing. What's the origin of it?"

"It began when our present C.O.'s ancestors raised the regiment," answered Taylor; "but the toast then was 'the Family.'"

Taylor looked round into the reckless, handsome face of Helen's brother. He was sitting between two civilian guests whom Taylor recognized as members of a local hard-riding, high-playing set in whose society Nevil Finch-Skye was accustomed to spend much time and more money. Nevil Finch-Skye leaned across to Taylor. "What time shall you want your room to-night?"

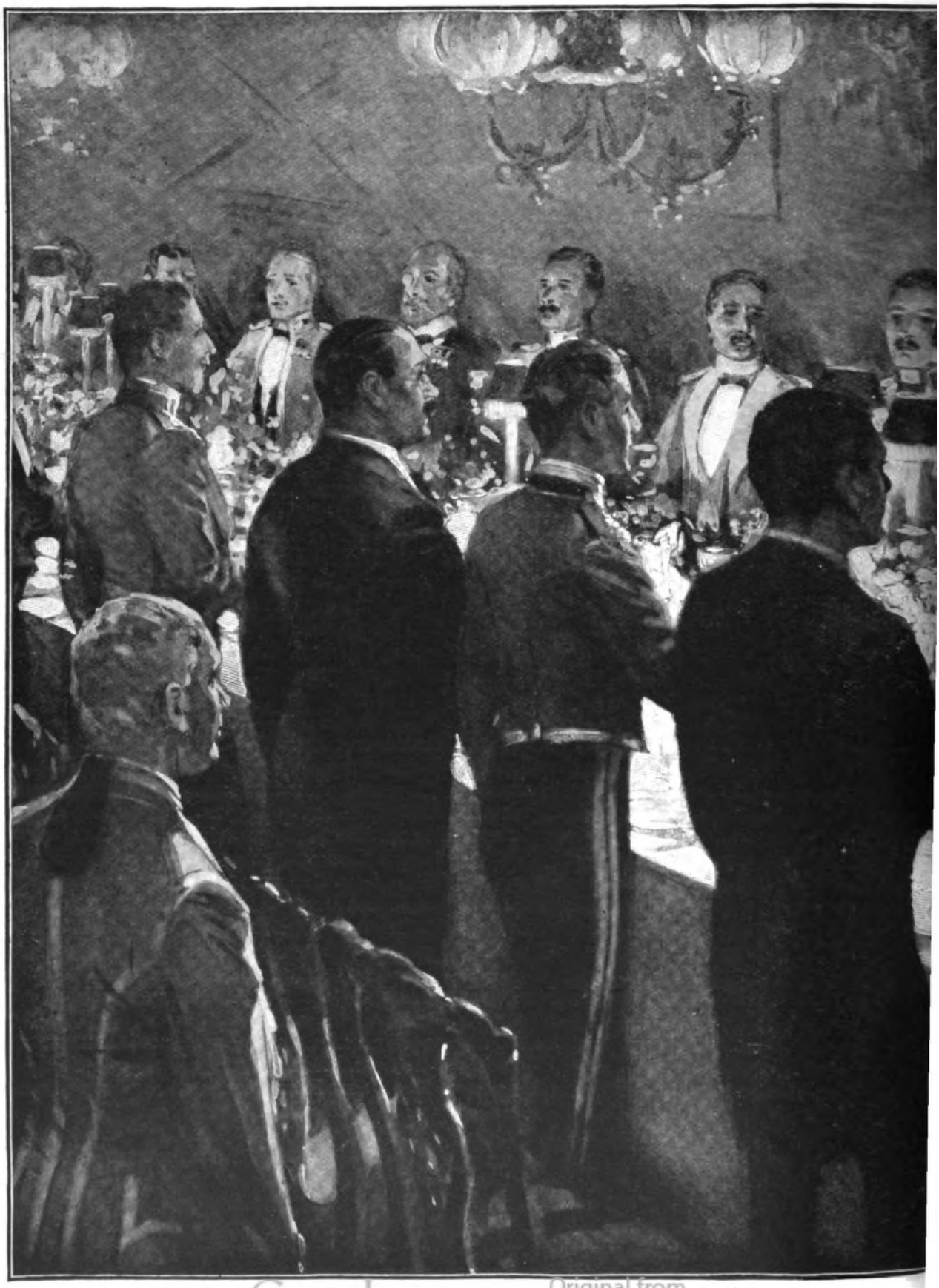
Taylor looked at him blankly, and then suddenly remembered that he had that morning promised to lend his room to Nevil Finch-Skye for cards. The compulsory low limit to the stakes on games played in the regimental anteroom sometimes caused private card-parties in officers' rooms, and as Nevil Finch-Skye's own room was in his father's quarters he usually borrowed a brother officer's.

"I'd forgotten, as a matter of fact," answered Taylor; "but it's all right. I don't know when I shall be up."

A sudden shuffle of feet and jingle of spurs cut off the conversation. The Colonel had risen to leave the room that his officers might be free to do likewise.

Taylor did not follow the others into the

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"DOWN THE ROOM COLONEL FINCH-SKYE ROSE TO HIS FEET AND RAISED HIS GLASS.

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IN SILENCE EVERY OFFICER DID LIKEWISE. 'GENTLEMEN! THE REGIMENT!'"

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anteroom. For once in his life he broke the mess rule which requires all junior officers to remain in mess on guest-night in courtesy to the regiment's visitors. He put on his great-coat and cap and went and walked the silent adjoining heath for a long, black two hours. And then he returned to barracks and went straight up to his room, forgetting that it would be occupied.

The players were so intent upon their game that they did not notice his entrance. Taylor stood a moment as though undecided whether to go out again ; then, with a weary gesture, he removed his coat and cap and flung himself into an easy-chair in a corner, and presently he began to watch the play in a half-mechanical fashion.

The three men were making full use of the privacy of the room. At Nevil Finch-Skye's elbow the pile of notes and gold was large, and growing with astonishing rapidity. Now and then, between the clink of glasses and the flick-flick of dealing cards, one of the players would utter an exclamation. The soldier seemed to be playing under the wing of Fortunatus. He could do no wrong.

His luck did not leave him impassive ; there was a breathless look about his parted lips, an odd gleam of flaming excitement in his eyes, an emotional quiver about his quickly-moving fingers which fascinated Taylor's attention despite the utter despondency of his thoughts. He remembered the game slightly. He had played it once with this very party, and, with a novice's luck, had won rather heavily. He could not remember its name, but it was an American combination of poker and *vingt-un*.

Through the haze of cigar-smoke Taylor stared at the handsome, irresolute face of Helen's brother. Compared with Ramsden, the opulent sporting civilian sitting at the side of the table, Nevil Finch-Skye looked less man than boy. Taylor found himself searching for outward signs of those things which marked the superiority of race—which distinguished himself, a quartermaster's son of unknown descent, from his brother officer whose past was marked and mingled for centuries with his ancient exclusive regiment.

It was almost unbelievable to the breadth of Taylor's logic that a man of race like his Colonel should betray the fatuous snobbery of a country doctor's wife. Was not a man who had carved for himself the niche which birth had denied him the equal of a man whose only claim was the accident of birth ?

A sudden staccato word crashed into Taylor's senses.

" Wait ! " The word was rapped across the card-table like a bullet at a steel plate.

With a quick thrust of his legs, Ramsden, the red-faced civilian, had kicked away his chair and was standing up, his heavy jaw thrust forward towards Nevil Finch-Skye, his right hand upon some cards which lay face upwards on the cloth.

" Mr. Finch-Skye," he said, quietly, dangerously, " why are there three aces of diamonds in these two packs of cards ? "

Nevil Finch-Skye was staring whitely at the other's shirt-front, as though fascinated.

The other man at the table gazed open-mouthed from the soldier to the civilian.

For quite half a minute sound and movement suffered a horrid hiatus.

" What—what do you mean ? " gasped Nevil Finch-Skye.

" You are playing with a 'sharp' pack," answered the civilian, slowly, distinctly.

Finch-Skye stared at the accusing red visage above him and suddenly round at the others, his glance coming to rest on the red-jacketed figure of the brother officer.

Taylor looked the Colonel's son in the eyes, and that which he saw there brought him to his feet.

" My God ! " he exclaimed, in a whisper.

And then Taylor saw something else which was visible to him only.

Glaringly white upon the dark blue overalled knees of his brother officer gleamed a card, on which a single red heart blazed like a spot of blood.

The civilian spoke again deliberately.

" If I did not see it with my own eyes," he said, " it would be incredible—an officer—of the Sixth Lancers."

Nevil Finch-Skye rose suddenly to his feet. As he did so the card fluttered from his knees to the dark carpet just at the edge of the table, and lay face upwards and distinct, damning.

And then before another word could be uttered Taylor's spurs clashed into the silence. In a couple of long strides he reached the table. A gold-cuffed sleeve flashed suddenly across the green cloth, and a strong brown hand clutched at the two offending cards with such violence that the small heap of cards and some of the money fell to the floor, obliterating that single devilish ace before another eye could see it.

Taylor faced the civilian.

" These cards," he said, slowly, that the words should sink in, " are mine."

All stared at him, and the seated man rose.

The colour flowed back to Nevil Finch-

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Skye's drawn face, and his features wrinkled oddly.

"Your cards!"

The civilian glared at the tall soldier.

"What the deuce——"

Taylor looked calmly into the heated red face.

"The cards are mine," he repeated, coldly, "like the room."

"What the devil's that got to do with it? You are not playing; you are not taking our money with a sleeved ace."

"It has everything to do with it," said Taylor, sharply. "Mr. Finch-Skye could scarcely insert an exact duplicate of one of my cards. That he has won is an accident. It's not the first time you've seen a man win, is it?"

He held up the two aces of diamonds that their backs could be seen; they were obviously of the same design.

The cold reason in his words snapped the other's anger. A flicker of doubt crossed his features. He looked round at Nevil Finch-Skye's pale face, and back to Taylor.

"Do you mean to tell me you keep cards which have five aces to the pack?" he demanded, slowly.

"No," answered Taylor, coolly; "six aces."

He bent down and gathered up the fallen cards. In mesmeric silence he faced them quickly upon the table, and picked out six aces—one club, one spade, two hearts, and two diamonds.

The third man spoke for the first time.

"Ramsden," he said, "you owe Mr. Finch-Skye a very serious apology. This—er—gentleman has proved his claim to a perfect sharper's pack."

Ramsden turned slowly to Nevil Finch-Skye.

"Finch-Skye," he said, "my hasty error I'm afraid is unpardonable. But your luck has been so remarkable, and in this game two certain aces is everything, as you know."

Nevil Finch-Skye did not answer.

Ramsden picked up the incriminating cards and examined them. The backs of the two aces which were duplicated were marked so that the manipulator could easily see from his opponents' "hands" that there would be no clashing when he produced his combination.

Ramsden turned to Taylor.

"Very ingenious," he said, deliberately. "There is only one possible deduction as to why you possess such cards, and I have just remembered an occasion a few months ago when you made a fourth with us at this game and were extraordinarily lucky."

Taylor's answer was a little unsteady in spite of his iron control.

"You must," he said, "make what deduction you please," and then he bent over the notes and gold upon the table.

"How much of this is yours?" he asked.

"Roughly, half," was the curt answer.

Swiftly Taylor divided it, and pushed one half towards each civilian.

"Finch-Skye," said Ramsden, "again I must apologize to you—humbly—and to your mess."

Nevil Finch-Skye muttered some incoherent thing with lips that seemed incapable of proper movement, and Taylor stepped to the door and opened it.

Without another word the two black-coated civilians passed through.

Taylor closed the door, and came back into the room straight to his brother officer.

"Why did you do it?" he demanded, fiercely.

Nevil Finch-Skye seemed suddenly to awaken from his stupor to a full realization of what had happened. He sprang quickly towards the door.

Taylor caught him by the arm.

"Loose me!" cried Nevil Finch-Skye. "I must stop them."

By main force Taylor thrust him into one of the vacated chairs.

"Now listen to me," said Taylor, in a voice that carried the whistle of steel. "What drove you to that—God only knows. We will say no more of it. But—before you leave this room, you will swear by all you hold sacred to let my—lie—be—the truth."

Slowly the Colonel's son raised his head.

"You ask me to keep that up—to ruin your life—for my sake?"

"For your sake?" said Taylor. "No! For something which you seem to have forgotten—the regiment!"

"The regiment!" repeated the other.

"You," said Taylor, steadily, "are the C.O.'s son, one of a long line of 'Sixth' officers—part of the regiment's very life. For you to have done a thing like that would drag its record along the garrison gutters and make it reek in every barrack-square. For me to do it is—well, to be expected, and will be forgotten before you get your third star."

Something in Taylor's tone pained like the thrust of a bayonet.

Nevil Finch-Skye rose quickly. "Do you think I'd have done that unless I was driven?" he cried. "Do you know what it is to be like a rat in a corner? They could have spared the money; they've won pots from me. Do



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you know what it is to be faced with ruin? To need money to the pitch of murder?"

At that moment a knock came at the door and a mess steward entered.

"Mr. Finch-Skye, sir—the Adjutant's compliments, and will you see him at once in the anteroom?"

The two officers looked at the man. Taylor answered.

"Mr. Finch-Skye will be down immediately."

The door closed on a dead silence. Both men realized the significance of the simple message. Taylor hooked his forefinger into his collar, as though to ease a sudden intolerable pressure. The other man stared at him beneath twitching eyelids. Taylor spoke again, steadily.

"Better not keep Edwards waiting." He walked to the door and laid his hand on the knob.

Heavily, unwillingly, like a figure responding to an invisible string, Nevil Finch-Skye followed him.

"I suppose," he said, labouredly, "you really—mean—me—to—stick——"

Taylor's look cut off the sentence abruptly—abased the question. It was as if he had been asked whether an outpost on a menaced battle-front should remain faithful to its trust.

Slowly Nevil Finch-Skye left the room. For several long minutes Taylor remained like a man in a dream, as men do sometimes in the cold preface of action, when a ray of God's sunshine breaks across the grey scarred trenches in the dawn, and flings on the mind's retina an instantaneous picture of soft golden corn at home, and a woman's face with waiting and longing in her eyes; to be obliterated just as quickly by the rattle of a bayonet scabbard against a rifle-barrel, a muttered oath, or the tinkle of empty cartridge-cases in the trench-bottom.

Nevil Finch-Skye had been gone just ten minutes when Taylor's door opened again and an officer entered. It was the Adjutant, Taylor's special friend.

"Halloa, Edwards!" exclaimed Taylor.

Edwards shut the door and stood just inside the room, perfectly still.

"Mr. Taylor," he said, slowly, "your sword!"

Taylor stared dumbly at him for a few seconds, and then he turned to a side table upon which gleamed a long plated scabbard in its gold-lace dress-slings. With a steady hand that closed lovingly around its cold, immaculate surface, he lifted it. In silence he turned upon his heel and held it towards the Adjutant, his eyes fixed upon the black, empty grip in its hilt of silvered steel.

The Adjutant's hand closed over the gold-braided knot and brought the bare white blade out of the scabbard.

"Does that mean I am under arrest?" asked Taylor, quietly.

"The Colonel is waiting for you in his quarters," said the Adjutant; and then, very stiffly, with Taylor's naked sword in his right hand, he turned upon a jingling heel and left Taylor standing in the middle of the room, his left hand gripping the empty scabbard.

## III.

TAYLOR was waiting in the hall nearly ten minutes before he was shown into the Colonel's room. He found his commanding officer standing rigid and inflexible beneath a row of pictured Finch-Skyes—lancers all.

"You sent for me, sir?" said Taylor, quietly.

The Colonel regarded him silently for a brief moment, his eyes gleaming like bayonet points.

"I've sent for you," he said, in a tone that cut like a falling blade, "as I never expected to send for an officer of the Sixth Lancers. It is difficult for me to believe, even now." He paused for a moment, and looked straightly, sternly, into Taylor's set face. "Two of our civilian guests," he continued, slowly, "accuse you of cheating—or its equivalent—at cards. Their evidence is supported by your brother officer, my son. Have you anything to say?"

Taylor's face grew whiter, but his answer was perfectly steady.

"There is nothing—more—to be said, sir."

The two men looked each other in the eyes.

"Have you no explanation—if such a thing can be explained?" asked the Colonel. "I could not expect you to have the instincts to keep you from that, but were not your future prospects sufficiently valuable to keep you from imperilling your career?"

"I have nothing to say, sir," answered Taylor.

The Colonel turned on his heel.

"You will send in your papers," he said, shortly. "You will be granted leave from to-night, pending the acceptance of your resignation."

At that moment the door was flung suddenly open and Helen entered with her brother. Distress was written upon Helen's face, but her eyes lit up with a great light as she looked at Gerry Taylor.

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"AND YOU LET A BROTHER OFFICER SHOULDER YOUR BLAME?"

Taylor knew suddenly what the interruption meant. He sprang forward towards Helen's brother and then stopped. Upon Nevil Finch - Skye sat a new look. He walked up to his father. The Colonel stood quite still, as though held by the sudden tension of an impending something.

"Dad," said Nevil Finch-Skye, quickly, abruptly, "I told you a lie to-night. Those cards were mine, not Taylor's. *I* was cheating, and Taylor—took the blame."

For a whole minute there was a dead silence, and the old Colonel stood as a bayoneted man stands at the moment of impact. Nevil's words carried the conviction of steel.

With a look from her brother to Gerry, Helen went to her father and gently took his arm. The action seemed to awaken him and bring back the soldier's mind. He stared at his son.

"You—a Finch-Skye?" he said, slowly.

The boy did not answer.

"And you let a brother officer shoulder your blame?"

Taylor spoke.

"I made him," he said.

The Colonel turned.

"Made him?" he repeated.

"Yes, sir," said Taylor.

The Colonel turned again to his son.

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"What made you speak now?" he asked.

"Helen, sir," was the unsteady answer; "her happiness. I've just found out Taylor is everything to her."

The Colonel stared at Taylor.

"And you?" he said, slowly. "I suppose that also was your motive—you shouldered my son's blame for his sister's sake, because you were in love with her?"

Taylor looked at him steadily.

"No, sir," he answered.

"Then why?" asked the Colonel. "What made you make a great sacrifice like that?"

"The regiment," stated Taylor, simply.

"The regiment!" repeated the Colonel.

"It did not matter so much—a ranker—doing that," said Taylor, quietly.

For quite a long time the Colonel remained rigid and wordless, his eyes upon his ranker officer. At last he spoke.

"Taylor," he said, a little unevenly, "you've taught a narrow old soldier the real meaning of the words 'an officer and a gentleman'—a lesson he will never forget."

Taylor's face flushed, and Helen's eyes were very bright.

The Colonel turned to his son, who stood white-faced and silent.

"You," he said, harshly, "will go across to the mess and tell your brother officers this—thing. You will then take off your uniform and——"

Taylor interrupted his commanding officer.

"Stop, sir!" he said, quietly but incisively. "That will only clear me, but there's the regiment. I could not prevent Nevil speaking, but I can ask you to let things stand."

The Colonel swung round slowly on his heel.

"Taylor," he said, in a voice that vibrated with feeling, "it is—impossible, even for the old regiment——"

The sudden opening of the door broke on the Colonel's sentence. The Adjutant had entered, followed by the two civilians. They halted suddenly. The Adjutant apologized quickly.

"I beg your pardon, sir; I did not know——"

The Colonel cut him off abruptly.

"You've come at the right moment, Edwards," he said, shortly. "Mr. Ramsden," he continued, "my son wishes to correct your ideas on the subject of the card party."

Nevil Finch-Skye's spurs jingled.

"The cards," he said, at once, "were mine, not Taylor's."

He turned and flung himself into a chair with his face in his hands.

"Good God!" exclaimed Ramsden, with a quick gesture towards the Adjutant. "I thought——"

The Adjutant was looking Taylor in the eyes, and a deep colour had flowed to his ears.

"You thought what, Mr. Ramsden?" asked the Colonel.

The Adjutant answered.

"Mr. Ramsden has just come back to barracks to see you, sir, because he was uneasy about this evening."

"I felt there was something funny somewhere," explained Ramsden, quickly. "We felt bound to come back and see you." He stepped towards Taylor, his red face mottling with emotion. "I should like to have the honour of shaking your hand, if you will allow me," he said, in moved tones. "It is beyond me such a——"

"Mr. Taylor," interrupted the Colonel, "took the blame for the sake of his regiment."

The civilians stood for half a minute in a silence that was almost awed. Then Ramsden turned to the Adjutant.

"Thank Heaven," he said, deliberately, "such a sacrifice was not in vain!"

All but Nevil stared at him, the Adjutant with a sudden comprehension.

"You mean——" he said.

"I mean," said Ramsden, "that if no one but ourselves knows of this evening's doings, we will wash it out."

The Colonel stiffened his shoulders, and the lines of his features deepened.

There was a short pause, broken by the Adjutant. He was looking at his C.O.

"No one else knows yet. Colonel," he pleaded, "the old regiment!"

A sob broke suddenly from Helen. The Colonel put his arm around her for a few seconds. Then he gently pushed her toward his ranker officer.

"Taylor," he said, "she's all I have now. I am proud to give her to you."

He turned again to the others, his finely-cut features rigid with repression.

"Gentlemen," he said, simply, "for my regiment I thank you."

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# Rolf, the Wonder Dog of Mannheim.

By PROFESSOR MARCUS HARTOG, M.A., D.Sc., F.L.S., F.R.H.S.,
Professor of Zoology in University College, Cork.



*From a Photo. by]* ROLF AND HIS MISTRESS. *[H. Lill, Mannheim.*

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The marvellous feats of Rolf, "the Thinking Dog," have aroused the greatest interest on the Continent, and have been the cause of much discussion; but we believe that this is the first detailed illustrated article on the subject to appear in this country. These feats at first sight appear to be wildly fantastic and incredible—but the fact remains that some of the most eminent scientific authorities alive have put them to the strictest tests and are convinced that they are genuine. If so, it is obvious that many of our ideas on the intelligence of animals will have to be changed. If, on the other hand, the feats are performed by means of trickery, so ingenious as to deceive the keenest scientific experts, it becomes a matter of almost as great interest to conjecture "how it is done." The usual explanation, that signs and sounds imperceptible to the spectator are employed, obviously will not suit the whole of the phenomena in the present instance.

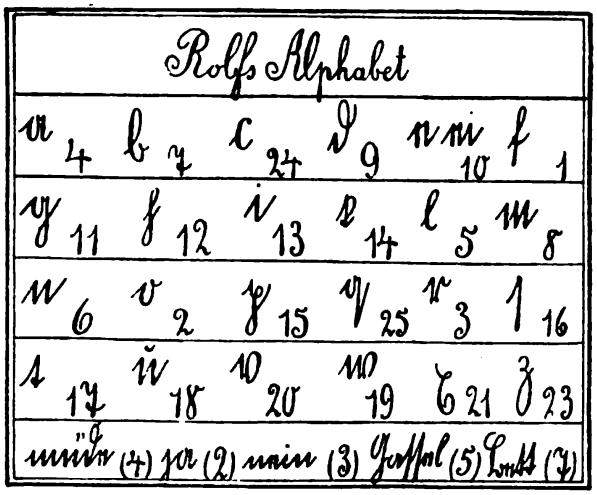
THE Elberfeld stallions, with their capacity for cipheringand their spontaneous communications in the way of sentences pawed out by a numerical alphabet, have not only excited the interest of all animal-lovers and psychologists on the Continent, but their fame has spread to England, and is beginning to arouse here the same heated controversies as abroad. Far more wonderful is Rolf, the Airedale terrier of Mannheim, whose deeds have, so far as I know, only been related over here within a limited compass in which it was impossible to do justice to the interesting results alleged to have been obtained, or to the immense body of evidence that, to my mind, carries conviction, despite the utterly unexpected character of his feats.

Rolf was a stray, picked up as a pup and tenderly nursed by the wife of an advocate of Mannheim, Dr. Moekel. This lady, evidently

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of strong character and great sympathy with animals, has for the last seven years been compelled to lead a sofa-life from "white leg," and the whole family life has centred in her room. Here she typed her letters, painted, received her guests; here the children prepared their lessons for school, or were instructed by private tutors. Here, too, Rolf spent most of his time playing with the children, and we may imagine him watching all that went on with that wistful gaze which every dog-lover interprets as expressing the wish to understand better and to be better understood. In this respect he had far more unconscious instruction than the horses, even though—perhaps because—there were no set lessons wherein attention was made a task. One day, we are told, the little girl had one of those fits to which all children are subject, in which it is hard to say whether temporary stupidity, inattention, or obstinacy is predominant.

"Come, now," said the mother, "any child knows what a hundred and twenty-two plus two is," and she noted Rolf looking on with large, imploring eyes. She went on: "I bet even Rolf knows. What is two plus two, Rolf?" To her surprise, Rolf immediately patted out four pats on her arm. This was a revelation, and Frau Moekel, finding, after some further tests, that this was no accident, took up the clue seriously, and devoted herself to educating the dog, in the same tender way that I have seen a mother talking to a dumb child to develop its faculties. She would show him objects in the room and explain what they were, or, if he himself sniffed earnestly at anything, would tell him all about it. She would sit with him for an hour at a time by the window, talking to him about every person and object that passed by.



FROM "TIERSEELE."

Soon she discovered that the dog could do complicated sums, including all the rules. It was found that he could read and understand figures, and answer by patting out what was written on a board, as well as what was set verbally. He also, as the children discovered, understood the value of the local decimal coins (one hundred pfennige equal one mark). "Mother" utilized his readiness to paw set numbers to devise means of elementary communication, with the following conventions: 2="yes," 3="no," 4="tired," 5="go out," 7="bed." One day she was typing a letter to her parents and recounting his prowess, and noticed that when she wrote "Rolf" he wagged his tail energetically as he sat looking on. I must quote her account:—

"I looked at him in amazement, and asked if he could read what I had written. With gleaming eyes he patted out his 'Yes'! Great was my delight; but no one would believe me, least of all my husband. I tried experiments, which succeeded without exception. I wrote down words very clearly and put a number under each on a board. I held the board up to him until I could assume that he had read all properly. I then turned over the board and wrote down one of the words without the number, and Rolf in each and every case patted out the correct number corresponding."

After this "Mother," having read casually in a newspaper of Krall's success in teaching the horses to spell by a conventional numerical alphabet, decided on asking Rolf if he would like to learn an alphabet to talk to her.—A very marked "Yes!"

"Now attend, Rolf. I will tell you a letter, and you will tell me what number to put to it."

She noted the numbers carefully, and next day found that Rolf had kept them fast in his head. In this way he learned an alphabet at the rate of about five letters a day. Rolf learned well and seemed to enjoy his lessons. But a curious fact soon became apparent: he used the letters *syllabically* as well as alphabetically. So when he was asked to spell "Karla," the name of the little girl, he spelt it *k r l a*, the letter "k" in German being called "ka." The Elberfeld stallions take the same liberty of simplification in their spelling, a device not unknown to the stenographer and to the semi-literate, also to the comic author—thus, "YY U R, YY U B, I C U R YY tor me" ("Too wise you are," etc.).

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Frau Moekel relates with much humour how once, when visitors were in the sitting-room, she sent off the children to do their sums elsewhere. She stole in on them after a time to see if they were working, and found them sitting with Rolf. All the answers to the sums in their exercise-books were, to her surprise, correct; but her suspicions had been aroused by the little boy's sending Rolf away when she came in, and when she asked him if Rolf had given the answers, "a very tiny voice answered, 'Yes!'"

So far we have drawn on Frau Moekel's own account, which may be regarded as tinged with optimism, if not partiality. But when we pass to the records of scientific visitors, well trained in observation and full of scientific caution, we find a confirmation which justifies us in regarding Frau Moekel as a "witness of truth," and that a very competent one. Dr. William Mackenzie, of Genoa, in the *Archives de Psychologie*, January, 1914, has given the most complete account of a three days' investigation; others have given accounts in the journal *Tierseele* and the *Mittheilungen* of the Society for Animal Psychology. The records are accompanied by "protocols," giving not merely the answers, but the numbers of Rolf's paw-pats and the letters corresponding. We have noted the abbreviated spelling he uses. P and B, K and G, T and D are freely interchanged, and a final "g" often replaces the breathed guttural "ch." I will spare the readers of THE STRAND MAGAZINE and give English renderings alone, as closely corresponding in style as I can, and call attention to the "pidgin-English" syntax, which is also characteristic of the early speech of children, nigger-English, and nigger-French, etc.

Great stress is laid by all observers, not so much on the feats of ciphering, which of course might, under less stringent conditions, be explicable by trickery or unconscious suggestion, as on the answering of the unprepared, as well as on Rolf's spontaneous—"utterances," shall we call them?

Thus Dr. Mackenzie brought in his pocket a handkerchief strongly scented, which Rolf promptly recognized as "handkerchief." He asked for another to be brought, which came duly folded from the wardrobe, and asked, "What is the difference?" Rolf, whose scent is apparently not well developed, answered, instead of "smells," which was expected, "*crinkled*" (*i.e.*, the child-word, not the standard German for *rumpled*). Dr. Mackenzie brought with him envelopes containing picture-cards, with the pictures to the back of the envelope; the card was taken out and handed over the shoulder of "Mother" towards Rolf, who was facing her, with the company behind her, so that the blank side of the card alone was visible to all but Rolf.

His identifications were every time correct. They gave even more than was expected; for he described birds sitting on a tiny, inconspicuous twig as "birds, *tree*." He gave the difference between men and women as "nice hair, clothes." When his attention was called to Dr. Moekel's fine beard and silk tie, and asked how men were different, the reply came, "trousers." After correctly identifying a dachshund, he was asked, "What are you?" "Dog." "Yes; but the dachs is a dog, too. What is the difference?" "Other feet." He correctly described a blue and a red square which Dr. Mackenzie had drawn on a card. Next day, however, he was disinclined for work, and the promise of sugar alone induced him to set to; but the italicized additions to the descriptions show one side of his character. The first was spotted as "blue star, *ugly*"; the second, shown the day before, came out this time "blue, red cube, *enough*." My baby son in Ceylon, when he did not want to be taught any more "things," always added to his answer "deng atti"—*now enough*. The first day Dr. Mackenzie was very pleased, and made to pat Rolf; but he is very nervous at being touched, especially at lesson-time, and growled. "Mother" scolded him, and he patted out, "Rolf nice, not bite."

The doctor must have been pleased when, at the beginning of the next sitting, Rolf pawed out, "Rolf love Dr. Mackenzie," and still more pleased to receive a few days after a letter dictated by Rolf, who, according to the elder daughter's statement, ran after her, insisting on her attending to his communication until she sat down to record the following: "Dear Dr. Mackenzie,—Come soon, never go away; bring pictures, yours too. Love.—Rolf." In the protocol of a later sitting we find the answer to a letter of a girl asking him to come and help her with her sums: "Love. Rolf come to you, help you cipher. Kiss.—Rolf." He received a letter from Herr Krall (the horse-trainer of Elberfeld), accompanied by a picture-book, containing a drawing of a school for animals, where the animals were not giving satisfaction. This was his answer: "Love. Glad of book; Daisy (the cat) must see. Animals like learning, bookmaker storyteller. Plenty gentle-

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men were there. Christchild (Father Christmas) coming. Mother brings him. Horses have a (Christmas) tree, too. Rolf gives you little Rolf (photograph). Many kisses.—Rolf." This marvellous answer demanded eight hundred and fifty taps and took fifty minutes. It was taken down in the presence of Professor Gruber, the zoologist, of Freiburg, and Privatdozent Dr. Gruber, and several others, besides Frau and Fräulein Luise Moekel.

When Frau Moekel related to Dr. Mackenzie how, on one of her rare walks, a man came up roughly to her and was seized by the throat by Rolf, who was removed with difficulty, the dog wagged his tail. "What are we talking about?" was asked. The reply was, "Man bad; Rolf help mother." Two very doggy stories are worth recounting, the second being taken from one of the protocols. Once, after the Continental custom, they were shaving Jela, the Airedale bitch who is Rolf's fellow inmate, and commented on the quantity of fleas, despite her weekly bath. Rolf patted, "Rolf plenty fleas; Jela plentier." During a test sitting Rolf suddenly was rude enough to stop short and scratch himself vigorously. Rebuked for this breach of etiquette, he pleaded, "Belly bite bad."

The dog, like a bright child, is not always ready to show off. On one occasion at a sitting, after two previous strenuous days with Professor Ziegler, he declined to look at the cards held up for spotting and finally tapped out, "Saw many pictures and said what it is with Ziegler; won't say any more; give over." This is from Dr. Gruber's protocol. A more amusing instance is related by "Mother." He would not show off before a lady visitor, and she asked him why he was so lazy. "Doctor forbids." "Well, will you ask Auntie something?" "Nine plus five?" The lady said in jest, "Thirteen," then "Fourteen," and finally "Fifteen," to all of which Rolf tapped out "No," most energetically at the correct answer, fourteen. "Well," said "Mother," "you tell us, Rolf." "Fourteen." "But Auntie said fourteen." "Sold!" tapped Rolf. "Well, now ask Auntie to do something for you." "Waggle," was the reply.

We all know how sympathetic dogs are to their owners when in trouble; and the wistful looks they cast, as if to say they know their master's pain and would do anything to soften it, are the commonplace of dog-loving authors. Frau Moekel relates that one day, when she was crying after her daughter had gone away to boarding-school, Rolf came up and tapped: "Mother not cry; makes Rolf sad."

The suggestions made to account for the extraordinary performances of the dog have been manifold. Telepathy has been most seriously invoked; and wireless telegraphy is not the wildest of the impossible suggestions that have been made by those who declare in advance the impossibility of animals thinking or counting. To anyone who considers the evidence dispassionately, however, the admission of unsuspected powers of learning, thinking, and expression in animals becomes the only legitimate inference, startling as it at first appeared to all of us.

However, virulent controversies, which have been compared to the Dreyfus Affair, have arisen in Germany about these manifestations of animal powers of reason. Strangely enough, we find strenuous advocates on both sides, the disbelievers adducing, some orthodox, some freethinking arguments against the very possibility of the facts; some, like Professor Plate, the disciple of Haeckel, on the one hand, and Professor Camillo Schneider and Frau Moekel herself, both sincere Catholics, on the other, maintain that the genuineness of the observations is equally immaterial to the cause of religion or irreligion, as the case may be. But the quaintest protest against such experiments was by Frau Professor Quidde, of Munich, who, after a paper read by Krall at the Zurich Congress for the Protection of Animals, got up and said she could no longer take part in the congress which listened to such things; that Krall was an accomplice of the vivisectionists; that she was indignant at such needless inquiries, since "animals are much more clever than human beings." And with this she shook the dust of the congress from her skirts.

I should add that neither the Mannheim dog nor the Elberfeld horses have ever been shown for money; the demonstration of their exploits has been a source of expense, not revenue. The maintenance of a stud of horses, not apparently used for breeding or riding, must have proved a very costly hobby to Herr Krall, the jeweller of Elberfeld. And the reception of a stream of visitors, the expense of an enormous correspondence, must have been a burden on the resources of a barrister's wife in the small provincial town of Mannheim.

It is obvious that the whole value of this account depends upon the overwhelming evidence of the eminent scientific men who have investigated the phenomena. To read

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ROLF, THE THINKING DOG OF MANNHEIM.
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over their protocols will convince any impartial reader of the authenticity and sincerity of their records, and in my opinion justify our willingness to accept in the same spirit the narrations of Frau Moekel, which—uncorroborated—would, we admit, be too startling for belief. At the suggestion of the Editor of THE STRAND MAGAZINE, I have written to the authors of the printed papers which I have utilized to supplement Frau Dr. Moekel's published articles and private letters with reference to the authenticity of the accounts and the genuineness of the phenomena. All have vouched for them over their signatures, and their letters have been duly submitted to the Editor. They are Emeritus Professor August Gruber; Dr. Karl Gruber, Privatdozent (Lecturer) in Zoology of the University of Munich; Professor Kraemer, of the Royal Agricultural College (Hochschule) at Hohenheim, in Würtemberg; Dr. William Mackenzie, psychologist, of Genoa; and Dr. Paul Sarasin, of Basle, the well-known traveller, anthropologist, and zoologist.

I reproduce a translation of Dr. Karl Gruber's letter: "DEAR PROFESSOR,—While thanking you for your friendly letter, I wish to confirm that I was a witness to Rolf's giving his answers. I was able to arrange investigations which excluded all conscious or unconscious deception, for Rolf alone was able to see the problems set for him to solve, and solved them.—With regards, yours sincerely, (Signed) DR. KARL GRUBER."


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# The Cop and the Anthem.

By
O. HENRY.

Illustrated by Treyer Evans.

ON his bench in Madison Square Soapymoved uneasily. When wild geese "honk" high at night, when women without sealskin coats grow kind to their husbands, and when Soapy moves uneasily on his bench in the park, you may know that winter is near at hand.

A dead leaf fell in Soapy's lap. His mind became cognizant of the fact that the time had come for him to provide against the coming rigour. And therefore he moved uneasily on his bench.



"PRISON LOOMED BIG AND TIMELY IN SOAPY'S MIND."

The winter ambitions of Soapy were not of the highest. In them there were no considerations of Mediterranean cruises, of soporific Southern skies, or drifting in the Vesuvian Bay. Three months in prison was what his soul craved. Three months of assured board and bed and congenial company, safe from Boreas and bluecoats, seemed to Soapy the essence of things desirable.

For years the hospitable cell had been his winter quarters. Just as his more fortunate fellow New Yorkers had bought their tickets to Palm Beach and the Riviera each winter, so Soapy had made his humbler arrangements for his annual hegira to prison. And now the time was come. On the previous night three Sabbath newspapers, distributed beneath his coat, about his ankles, and over his lap, had failed to repulse the cold as he slept on his bench near the spurting fountain in the ancient square. So prison loomed big and timely in Soapy's mind. He scorned the provisions made in the name of charity for the city's dependents. In Soapy's opinion the law was more benign than philanthropy. There was an endless round of institutions on which he might set out and receive lodging and food accordant with the simple life. But to one of Soapy's proud spirit the gifts of charity are encumbered. If not in coin, you must pay in humiliation of spirit for every benefit received at the hands of philanthropy. As Cæsar had his Brutus, every bed of charity must have its toll of a bath, every loaf of bread its compensation of a private and personal inquisition. Wherefore it is better to be a guest of the law, which, though conducted by rules, does not meddle unduly with a gentleman's private affairs.

Soapy, having decided to go to prison, at once set about accomplishing his desire. There were many easy ways of doing this. The pleasantest was to dine luxuriously at some expensive restaurant, and then, after declaring insolvency, be handed over quietly and without uproar to a policeman. An accommodating magistrate would do the rest.

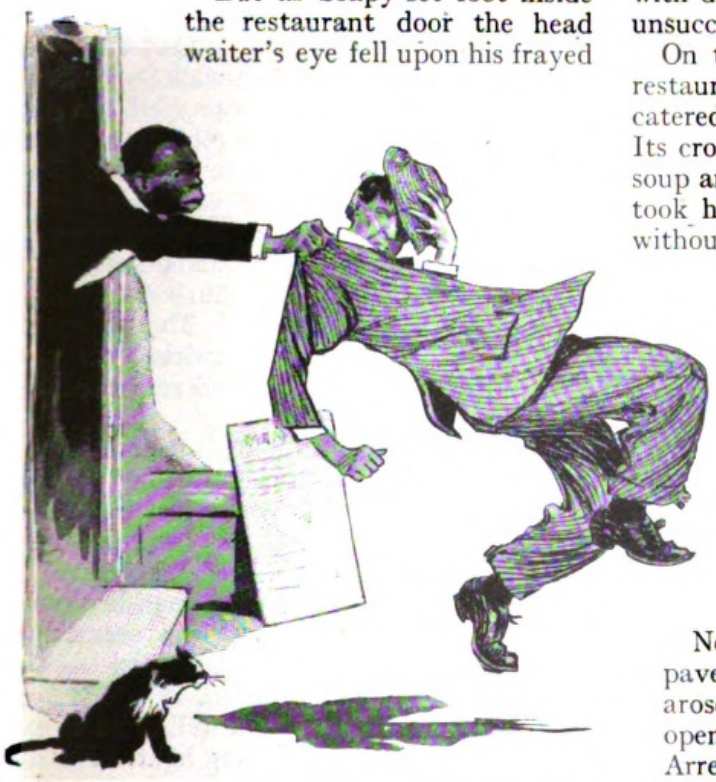
Soapy left his bench and strolled out of the

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square and across the level sea of asphalt where Broadway and Fifth Avenue flow together. Up Broadway he turned, and halted at a glittering *café*, where are gathered together nightly the choicest products of the grape, the silkworm, and the protoplasm.

Soapy had confidence in himself from the lowest button of his vest upward. He was shaven and his coat was decent, and his neat black, ready-tied "four-in-hand" had been presented to him by a lady missionary on Thanksgiving Day. If he could reach a table in the restaurant unsuspected, success would be his. The portion of him that would show above the table would raise no doubt in the waiter's mind. A roasted mallard duck, thought Soapy, would be about the thing—with a bottle of Chablis, and then Camembert, a demi-tasse, and a cigar. One dollar for the cigar would be enough. The total would not be so high as to call forth any supreme manifestation of revenge from the *café* management; and yet the meat would leave him filled and happy for the journey to his winter refuge.

But as Soapy set foot inside the restaurant door the head waiter's eye fell upon his frayed trousers and decadent shoes. Strong and ready hands turned him about and conveyed him in silence and haste to the sidewalk, and averted the ignoble fate of the menaced mallard.



"STRONG AND READY HANDS TURNED HIM ABOUT AND CONVEYED HIM IN HASTE TO THE SIDEWALK."

Soapy turned off Broadway. It seemed that his route to the coveted haven of refuge was not to be an epicurean one. Some other way of entering limbo must be thought of.

At a corner of Sixth Avenue electric lights and cunningly-displayed wares behind plate-glass made a shop window conspicuous. Soapy took a cobblestone and dashed it through the glass. People came running around the corner, a policeman in the lead. Soapy stood still, with his hands in his pockets, and smiled at the sight of brass buttons.

"Where's the man that done that?" inquired the officer, excitedly.

"Don't you figure out that I might have had something to do with it?" said Soapy, not without sarcasm, but friendly, as one greets good fortune.

The policeman's mind refused to accept Soapy, even as a clue. Men who smash windows do not remain to parley with the law's minions. They take to their heels. The policeman saw a man half-way down the street running to catch a car. With drawn club he started in hot pursuit. Soapy, with disgust in his heart, loafed along, twice unsuccessful.

On the opposite side of the street was a restaurant of no great pretensions. It catered to large appetites and modest purses. Its crockery and atmosphere were thick; its soup and napery thin. Into this place Soapy took his accusive shoes and telltale trousers without challenge. At a table he sat and consumed beefsteak, flapjacks, doughnuts, and pie. And then to the waiter he betrayed the fact that the minutest coin and himself were strangers.

"Now, get busy and call a cop," said Soapy. "And don't keep a gentleman waiting."

"No cop for you," said the waiter, with a voice like butter-cakes and an eye like the cherry in a Manhattan cocktail. "Hey, Con!"

Neatly upon his left ear on the callous pavement two waiters pitched Soapy. He arose, joint by joint, as a carpenter's rule opens, and beat the dust from his clothes. Arrest seemed but a rosy dream. Prison seemed very far away. A policeman who stood before a drug-store two doors away laughed and walked down the street.

Five blocks Soapy travelled before his courage permitted him to woo capture again. This time the opportunity presented what he fatuously termed to himself a "cinch." A young woman of a modest and pleasing guise

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was standing before a show window, gazing with sprightly interest at its display of shaving-mugs and inkstands, and two yards from the window a large policeman of severe demeanour leaned against a water-plug.

It was Soapy's design to assume the *rôle* of the despicable and execrated "masher." The refined and elegant appearance of his victim and the contiguity of the conscientious cop encouraged him to believe that he would soon feel the pleasant official clutch upon his arm that would ensure his winter quarters on the right little, tight little isle.



"SOAPY STOOD STILL, WITH HIS HANDS IN HIS POCKETS, AND SMILED AT THE SIGHT OF BRASS BUTTONS."

Soapy straightened the lady missionary's ready-made tie, dragged his shrinking cuffs into the open, set his hat at a killing cant, and sidled toward the young woman. He made eyes at her, was taken with sudden coughs and "hems," smiled, smirked, and went brazenly through the impudent and contemptible litany of the "masher." With half an eye Soapy saw that the policeman was watching him fixedly. The young woman moved away a few steps, and again bestowed her absorbed attention upon the shaving-mugs. Soapy followed, boldly stepping to her side, raised his hat, and said:—

"Ah, there, Bedelia! Don't you want to come and play in the yard?"

The policeman was still looking. The persecuted young woman had but to beckon a finger, and Soapy would be practically *en route* for his insular haven. Already he imagined he could feel the cosy warmth of the station-house. The young woman faced him and, stretching out a hand, caught Soapy's coat-sleeve. "Sure, Mike," she said, joyfully. "I'd have spoke to you sooner, but the cop was watching."

With the young woman playing the clinging ivy to his oak Soapy walked past the policeman overcome with gloom. He seemed doomed to liberty.

At the next corner he shook off his companion and ran. He halted in the district where by night are found the lightest streets, hearts, vows, and librettos. Women in furs and men in great-coats moved gaily in the wintry air. A sudden fear seized Soapy that some dreadful enchantment had rendered him immune to arrest. The thought brought a little of panic upon it, and when he came upon another policeman lounging grandly in front of a transplendent theatre he caught at the immediate straw of "disorderly conduct."

On the sidewalk Soapy began to yell drunken gibberish at the top of his harsh voice. He danced, howled, raved, and otherwise disturbed the welkin.

The policeman twirled his club, turned his back to Soapy, and remarked to a citizen:—

"'Tis one of them Yale lads celebratin' the goose-egg they give to the Hartford College. Noisy, but no harm. We've instructions to lave them be."

Disconsolate, Soapy ceased his unavailing racket. Would never a policeman lay hands on him? In his fancy prison seemed an unattainable Arcadia. He buttoned his thin coat against the chilling wind.

In a cigar store he saw a well-dressed man lighting a cigar at a swinging light. His silk umbrella he had set by the door on entering. Soapy stepped inside, secured the umbrella, and sauntered off with it slowly. The man at the cigar light followed hastily.

"My umbrella," he said, sternly.

"Oh, is it?" sneered Soapy, adding insult to petty larceny. "Well, why don't you call a policeman? I took it. Your umbrella!

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Why don't you call a cop? There stands one on the corner."

The umbrella owner slowed his steps. Soapy did likewise, with a presentiment that luck would again run against him. The policeman looked at the two curiously.

"Of course," said the umbrella man—"that is—well, you know how these mistakes occur. I—if it's your umbrella, I hope you'll excuse me—I picked it up this morning in a restaurant. If you recognize it as yours—why, I hope you'll——"

"Of course it's mine," said Soapy, viciously.

The ex-umbrella man retreated. The policeman hurried to assist a tall blonde in an opera-cloak across the street, in front of a street-car that was approaching two blocks away.

Soapy walked eastward through a street damaged by improvements. He hurled the umbrella wrathfully into an excavation. He muttered against the men who wear helmets and carry clubs. Because he wanted to fall into their clutches, they seemed to regard him as a king who could do no wrong.

At length Soapy reached one of the avenues to the east where the glitter and turmoil was but faint. He set his face down this toward Madison Square, for the homing instinct survives even when the home is a park bench.

But on an unusually quiet corner Soapy came to a standstill. Here was an old church, quaint and rambling and gabled. Through one violet-stained window a soft light glowed, where, no doubt, the organist loitered over the keys, making sure of his mastery of the coming Sabbath anthem. For there drifted out to Soapy's ears sweet music that caught and held him transfixed against the convolutions of the iron fence.

The moon was above, lustrous and serene; vehicles and pedestrians were few; sparrows twittered sleepily in the eaves—for a little while the scene might have been a country churchyard. And the anthem that the organist played cemented Soapy to the iron fence, for he had known it well in the days when his life contained such things as mothers and roses and ambitions and friends and immaculate thoughts and collars.

The conjunction of Soapy's receptive state of mind and the influences about the old church wrought a sudden and wonderful change in his soul. He viewed with swift horror the pit into which he had tumbled, the degraded days, unworthy desires, dead hopes, wrecked faculties, and base motives that made up his existence.

And also in a moment his heart responded thrillingly to this novel mood. An instantaneous and strong impulse moved him to battle with his desperate fate. He would pull himself out of the mire; he would make a man of himself again; he would conquer the evil that had taken possession of him. There was time; he was comparatively young yet; he would resurrect his old eager ambitions and pursue them without faltering. Those solemn but sweet organ notes had set up a revolution in him. To-morrow he would find work. A fur importer had once offered him a place as driver. He would find him to-morrow and ask for the position. He would be somebody in the world. He would——

Soapy felt a hand laid on his arm. He looked quickly around into the broad face of a policeman.

"What are you doin' here?" asked the officer.

"Nothin'," said Soapy.

"Then come along," said the policeman.

"Three months," said the magistrate in the police-court the next morning.



"'WHAT ARE YOU DOIN' HERE?' ASKED THE OFFICER."

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# Looping the Loop

## An Adventure of Sam Briggs.

By Richard Marsh

Illustrated by Charles Pears

WHEN I thought of what was to happen to me on the morrow, which was the August Bank Holiday, my blood ran cold—at least it did not exactly run cold, because the weather was much too hot for anything of that kind.

It all came from my fondness for joining in a general conversation. There was a little party at Mrs. Wilkinson's. There was Mrs. Wilkinson, and there was Tom, and there were three or four people whom I knew more or less—and there was Dora. I may say, in a manner of speaking, that Dora did it. My feelings towards that girl—however, we won't dwell upon that matter now; some things are better forgotten. There was a person there named Arthur Brown, with sandy hair and freckles, and a manner which put me all on edge. The way he talked you'd have thought he owned the earth. He had made fifty-four or fifty-five runs in a cricket match the day before, which was Saturday afternoon, and the way he talked about it was just as much as I could stand. And that Tom Wilkinson backed him up. I found out afterwards that Tom, who is a regular blood, owed him very nearly a pound, money lent.

"Some of your strokes, Arthur," said Tom, "were about as good as anything I've seen. That snick of yours through point to the boundary was a beauty."

"What snick was that?" asked Brown. "I cut several boundaries to point—it's rather a favourite stroke of mine."

"As a matter of fact," said George Miller, who, like me, had had about enough of him, "I should hardly call the stroke a cut at all. You get under the ball, up it goes in the air, and the last person who knows where it's going is the striker." There were audible smiles at this—we had all of us had about enough of Brown. Miller added, "And of course the bowling yesterday afternoon was tosh. What I wondered was that you didn't make five hundred instead of fifty. Then look at the lives you got—if there had been anybody there who could hold a ball you'd have been out in the first over."

This, I admit, was severe on Brown. Dora did not like it—I call her Dora though I had only met her three or four times, but such were my feelings towards the girl. She observed, in what I should describe as a sarcastic tone of voice:—

"It's easy for some people to make fun of what other people do, especially when they can do nothing themselves. I love cricket. and a man who can bat well I admire almost beyond anything."

Miller having set the ball rolling, we all of us, so to speak, had a kick at it. In consequence of what Miss Wilkinson had said every gentleman present wanted to give her to understand that even if he could not play cricket it was not only because he despised the game but also because he could do lots of other things in a way which had surprised everyone who had seen him. It stands to reason that I was not going to be left out of a conversation like that. I gave Miss Wilkinson to understand that I did not play football, or cricket, or hockey, or tennis, because my tastes were for what you might call higher things.

"What do you call 'higher things,' Briggs?" asked Miller, speaking with what

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I should call positive rudeness. "Sitting on the top of a bus, or sliding on your back down Primrose Hill?"

I just withered Miller and confined my remarks to Miss Wilkinson.

"I don't want to boast," I told her, "and, as a matter of fact, it is nothing to boast of, because in things like this it's as you're made. I think I may say that I don't mind danger—I'd like to be an airman—that's the sort of thing which appeals to me, something where there is danger."

"Ever been up in an aeroplane?" asked an individual whom I had never seen before. If I had been wise I should have had a good look at him; but that's me all over, do a thing first and think about it afterwards—that seems to be my motto.

"I cannot exactly say," I observed, "that I have positively been up in an aeroplane, but it doesn't follow that my tastes don't run in that direction. My own opinion is, speaking of what I know of myself, that I'd make rather a good hand at the game."

"What game?"

"Flying."

"Then you're the very man I want."

"I don't quite follow you," I told him.

"I want a flying man."

I stared at him. "But I can't positively call myself a flying man, never having flown. I might also mention that I've never even seen an aeroplane close to."

"No, but you said your tastes lay in that direction."

"Yes, Mr. Briggs, you certainly did. I heard you. You said you liked anything in which there was danger. There's lots of danger in flying."

That was Dora Wilkinson, and, looking back, I call a remark like that, coming from her, hitting below the belt. I could not back out from what she'd heard me say right in front of her very face. So I maintain that it was she who practically drove me to stick to my guns. So I stuck to them.

"I'm obliged to you, sir," I told the stranger. "I don't happen to have the pleasure of knowing who you are—if I heard it I didn't catch your name. At any time you may care, as I might call it, to introduce me to an aeroplane I shall be at your service—whether by night or by day."

"I'll introduce you to one to-morrow if you'd like me to."

"Oh, Mr. Briggs, how delightful that will be." This was Dora Wilkinson, but what she knew about it I can't say.

"Tom," I said, right out, "would you mind introducing me to your friend?"

"The gentleman is a friend of mine," said Arthur Brown, "but it so happens that I don't know his name."

"I was having a little something to eat with Charlie Herriot," the stranger explained, "and after we had finished this gentleman came in. He left the same time I did, and, as he was going in my direction, we walked together. When we came to the door of this house he was so good as to say, 'I'm going in to see an old friend of mine; care to come in? I'm sure he'd look upon any friend of mine as a friend of his.'"

From the way in which the stranger spoke, I could see with half an eye that he was a cut above Brown's lot. He went on:—

"Permit me to apologize for my intrusion, and at the same time to introduce myself. My name is Launcelot King—you may, by some fortunate accident, have heard of me in connection with aeroplanes. I'm an airman."

Launcelot King! The instant I heard the name I knew I had put my foot in it. What you might call a premonitory shiver went down my back.

"You don't, by any chance," I asked him, with a sort of a gasp, "happen to be *the* Launcelot King?"

"I believe," he answered, "I may say that I am."

"What! The party who loops the loop and all that kind of thing?"

"I certainly have looped the loop, as the public calls it. I hope to do it again to-morrow."

That was a facer. If there was anyone, as the papers put it, who was in the public eye in connection with aeroplanes, it was Launcelot King. There is nothing in a flying way he hasn't done. I don't quite know what he has done, not having been, up to that moment, very much interested in aviation, but I believe he has done everything in the flying line that can be done—flown over the Channel I don't know how many times; I believe he's flown over the Alps, or the Pyrenees, or something of the kind; I've a strong idea that he's flown higher than anybody else, and farther too—in fact, as I said, I don't believe there's anything he hasn't done. And fancy me talking about being fond of danger to a man like that!

While we all sat staring at him, feeling, I've no doubt, what a lot of idiots we were, he said, casual like, to me:—

"Mr. Briggs, sir, I believe is your name.

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"I WANT A FLYING MAN."

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If, as you say, you'd like to be an airman, I'll not only introduce you to an aeroplane, but to-morrow I'll take you with me as my passenger. To-morrow, being Bank Holiday, I am giving an exhibition at the Wormwood Scrubs Aerodrome. I've got to have a passenger, and if you'll let me have the favour of your company I shall have pleasure in giving you a seat in my car."

When he talked to me like that I felt as if something must have gone wrong with my inside. The others, like a lot of jackasses, actually applauded him as if he had said something clever. Dora Wilkinson jumped up from her chair and clapped her hands.

"Oh, Mr. Briggs," she cried, as if she had any right to so much as open her mouth, "what an honour for you! Mr. King, do you mean it? Will you really take Mr. Briggs up with you as a passenger to-morrow?"

"I shall be delighted." Mr. King held out his hand, just in time to keep that girl from starting to clap again. "I sha'n't be doing Mr. Briggs a favour—he'll be doing me one. Mr. Briggs, may I count upon you to-morrow?"

I wriggled—just wriggled. That was all I could do. With them all looking on, especially that Dora Wilkinson, I couldn't very well get up and leave the room, saying something about being in a hurry to catch a train, so I just went on sitting—and I wriggled.

"Will there be anything to pay?" asked Dora Wilkinson.

"Pay?—by Mr. Briggs? Rather not. If I can count upon his assistance for the whole of my programme I might be able to go so far as to present him with a five-pound note."

I confess that that appealed to me—decidedly. Not too many fivers come my way, worse luck! and the chance of getting one does appeal to me.

"Fancy," said Dora; "how splendid! You're not only going to do what you'd love to do, but you're going to be paid for doing it. A five-pound note will come in rather useful, won't it, Mr. Briggs?"

That was a malicious remark for her to make, I say it distinctly. There had been a little something said, a few days before, about her going out with me to a picture show—me paying; and the matter had only fallen through because I didn't happen at the moment to have enough cash to do the paying. The end of the month it was—I get paid monthly, I do; at the end of the month I generally am a little short, but that particular month, as luck would have it, I was absolutely stony—dead broke.

"Then if you did get that fiver you might take me to a picture show, mightn't you, Mr. Briggs? And we might sit in the best seats. Wouldn't that be lovely?"

Before I could answer her, as I should have done in half a minute—oh, there are cases in which I can give as good as is sent!—but before, as I said, I could get my words, as it were, together, to let certain people know what I thought of them, Mr. King got up from his chair, and he addressed himself to me in a manner which I felt was most gentlemanly and flattering.

"I'm afraid I must be off. Now, Mr. Briggs, may I count upon you to-morrow? You will do me a considerable service if I can. To tell you the truth, I was rather wondering where my passenger was coming from. Like a good fellow, say 'yes.'"

"Of course he'll say 'yes'; he'd never dream of refusing—would you?" cried Dora.

"Well, Mr. King," I began, "it's only fair to let you know that I never have been in an aeroplane as yet."

"That makes no difference. I sha'n't ask you to act as pilot, or do anything except sit still. The flying begins at three; if you'll be on the ground at half-past two there'll be plenty of time to tell you everything which need be told—which is practically nothing. I'll just give you a few hints and we'll be off."

"Where are you going to?" asked Miller, who, I could see, was more impressed than he cared to own. It isn't everyone who has a chance of going flying with Launcelot King. I awaited Mr. King's answer with interest; I didn't want to start flying across Europe without, so to speak, knowing it.

"To begin with," he said, "we shall go nowhere, just round and round the ground, to show the crowd that I have the aeroplane under complete control."

"And then?"

"And then?" Mr. King shrugged his shoulders. "Then I shall show the people what you might call a few tricks."

"With Briggs on board?"

"Obviously; that's one of the chief points why I'm counting on Mr. Briggs's assistance. Between ourselves, a crowd always seems to enjoy such a trick as looping the loop better when the pilot has a passenger on board—I fancy it's because they're always expecting to see him fall out."

"You hear that, Briggs? Mind you oblige the company by treating them to a little performance on your own."

Mr. King was most pleasant—at least, he meant to be.



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"Never mind him, Mr. Briggs—I needn't tell you that the chance of your falling out is a very slight one."

Miller persisted—clumsy idiot! "Still there is a chance, isn't there?"

"Of course there's a chance; when you're up in the air there's always a chance of anything happening. But I understood Mr. Briggs to say that that was exactly what appeals to him—the spice of danger. I can promise you this, Mr. Briggs—if you're a lover of sensations, you shall be treated to some to-morrow. Even an old and seasoned hand as I am sometimes gets all the sensations he wants when he's giving an exhibition performance such as I am to give to-morrow at Wormwood Scrubs."

With that Mr. King went—and the moment he had gone they all set at me. A nice time I had between them! Miller began by suggesting that I might catch the night train for Paris, or Timbuctoo, or somewhere, and that would be a good excuse for my non-appearance on the Monday. Someone else made out that if I bribed the driver of a taxi-cab to have an accident and smash me up that would serve the purpose equally well. They all made out that the one thing I wanted was to keep as far away from Wormwood Scrubs as I jolly well could.

Dora Wilkinson saw me to the front door. I do not deny that I might have been a minute or two getting through it. That girl had egged me on as far as I had got—that I shall always maintain—and while she was saying good-night to me she egged me farther.

I left Mrs. Wilkinson's house with my head in a whirl. I had not only undertaken, if anything happened to Mr. King, to fly his aeroplane myself, but also promised, when the flying was over, to take that girl to a picture show. I will not say we kissed—I don't wish to go into private matters in public—but as I walked along the pavement and waved my hand to her for the very last time I told myself that that was a girl in a million. The way she had called me "Sam" made me thrill all over.

And yet all the while I knew that she had egged me on. It was like Samson and Delilah, or something of that sort—for all I knew she had lured me to my ruin. When I got home, the moment I set foot inside the door my sister, who was going in to supper, said to me:—

"Halloa, Sam! What's up? You look as if you'd found sixpence."

I said nothing to her; I said nothing to them all, till we were seated at table. The guv'nor was talking about something he had read in *The News of the World*, and talking about how dangerous it was to drive a motor-car at sixty miles an hour along Fleet Street in the middle of the day, when I mentioned casually, as it might be, as if it was nothing at all:—

"I'm going flying to-morrow."

You should have seen the guv'nor put down his knife and fork, and the way in which the *mater* stared at me.

Louisa laughed—as if I had said something funny.

"Sam—don't be silly! Fancy your talking about going flying, when you hardly dare trust yourself in a motor-car if it's going very fast. Bob Snelling told me that once you were quite cross with him because he would keep going at more than thirty miles an hour. Flying, indeed! You!"

In my judgment Louisa's little speech was decidedly offensive. I told her so.

"I suppose, Louisa, it's no use asking you to behave yourself—you don't know how to do it—so I'll just merely repeat that to-morrow I'm going flying."

"Sam!" exclaimed the *mater*. "Whatever do you mean? I do hope you're not thinking of doing anything silly!"

"The word 'silly' as applied to me on the present occasion is out of place." It is not often I ride the high horse, but when I do I'm a oner to go. I spoke my mind to the *mater* quite plainly. "When I mention that I have made arrangements with Mr. Launcelot King, the distinguished airman, to give an exhibition with him to-morrow afternoon at Wormwood Scrubs, illustrative of recent progress in aviation, I have nothing further to add. A hundred thousand spectators are expected to be present."

You should have seen the look which was on their faces. It is my impression that they thought I had suddenly gone off my dot, but nothing was farther from the fact. My intention was to let them know that they had been mistaken in my character. I was strung up to the sticking-point, and so I gave them to understand. The *mater* made quite a scene. She positively said, right to my very face, and me of age, a grown-up man, that she would not have me risk my life. The guv'nor laughed at her.

"Now, mother, don't be silly. I'm proud of Sam. I don't know if he's serious——"

"If you'll come to Wormwood Scrubs to-morrow afternoon—I'll give you a pass which will admit you to the ground—you'll find I never was more serious in my life."

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"Sam," said the *mater*, "I hope you're going to do nothing dangerous?"

"I'm going to do everything that's dangerous—that's the idea. It is no good talking, mother; it's all signed and sealed and settled. I've lived a very quiet life up to the present, but from this time on I shall probably keep myself before the public eye."

I have read about condemned criminals sleeping soundly just before their execution; there was nothing of that sort about me—not much! As a rule, I am a good hand at sleeping, perhaps a bit too good; but that Sunday night before Bank Holiday—oh, my word! It was that hot—my bedroom was not large, with the window wide open top and bottom there seemed to be no air—anyhow it would not have been easy to sleep. But with Mr. Launcelot King on my mind, I suppose it was three o'clock in the morning before I closed my eyes.

Louisa was waiting breakfast for me all alone by herself.

"Sam," she began, as soon as I put my nose inside the door, "you're not really going flying, are you?"

It was no use my telling her that when I said a thing I meant it, because she knew better, so I merely observed:—

"Come to Wormwood Scrubs this afternoon and you'll see."

"Whatever made you think of doing anything so wicked?"

"Wicked?" It was my turn to stare. "It's the first time I knew there was anything wicked about flying."

"All I know is that mother has had an awful night all because of you. I think you ought to go up to her and tell her it was only a joke of yours. Suppose anything happens to you? Suppose they bring you back dead, or with every bone in your body broken—what will become of mother?"

It seemed to me that, in that case, the question was what would become of me. I said as much.

"Louisa, I don't mind telling you that it's not a job I'm so extra keen about; not so keen this morning as I was last night. But I've given my word; Mr. King is depending on me, and I'm not going to back out of it. Of course, if anything does happen to me it does—and that's all about it."

Louisa looked as if she could not make me out at all.

"I don't mind what happens to you; if you choose to smash yourself up you must; but I do think you needn't have said a word to mother till all was over. You know how she worries every time you talk about doing something silly—now she'll know no peace till they've brought you back on a stretcher. I see by this morning's paper that two more flying men were killed on Saturday, and now I've got to hide the paper away from mother lest she should see it too. I do think you might have kept a still tongue in your head. What time is it going to be?"

"I'm to be on the ground at half-past two, and the exhibition will commence at three. There seems to be a bit of a breeze—perhaps he won't go up. It may turn to a gale of wind before this afternoon."

"Launcelot King will go up if it blows a hurricane—he always does—he's a most dangerous man. He's absolutely certain to kill himself one day, with the risks he takes. But I don't believe for a moment he'll take you."

"Won't take me? Why?"

"I shouldn't wonder if mother asked him not to."

"Asked him not to! She hadn't better! I'm not a baby!"

"You're worse; you're mad. You know, Sam, sometimes you really are not responsible."

"I'll trouble you, Louisa Briggs, not to talk like that to me. Seems to me that the one place where you can rely on being insulted is your own home. No one would dare to talk to me like that outside it."

"That's because they don't know you. I don't suppose when Mr. King has a really good look at you, and sees what sort of person you are, he'll dream of taking you with him."

I pushed my plate away from me; her style of conversation was all the breakfast I wanted.

"Thank you very much indeed, Louisa, for your kind remarks. If, as I've already said, you're on the ground this afternoon, you'll see."

I never shall forget that August Bank Holiday as long as I live. The guv'nor had gone to business; he's in the General Post Office, and Bank Holidays make no difference to him. I didn't want to risk an interview with the *mater*, so I walked straight out of the house as soon as breakfast was finished. A man doesn't want to have a scene with his mother no matter how his mind is made up. I walked over to Bill Edwards to get him to come out for a stretch. I knew there was no fear of any nonsense about him. Glad to see me, he was—wanted to walk down to Hampton and make a day of it. When I told him I couldn't, because I was booked to fly that

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afternoon, he simply yelled—a bit noisy, Bill Edwards is.

"I was just wondering what I could do with myself that didn't cost money," he said, "when you came in, and I was looking in the paper to see what there was. I saw about Wormwood Scrubs, and I was just thinking that I might as well go and look at the flying."

"Admission to the ground is half a crown, and I don't know how much extra for the reserved enclosure."

"I wasn't going to pay any half-crown. What do you take me for? The thing about flying is that you can see just as well outside the ground as you can in—especially at a place like Wormwood Scrubs. Here's all about it."

He spread a newspaper out on the table.

"It's Launcelot King I want to see. It seems he's going to give them thrillers. Honest Injin, Sam, you're not going up with him?"

"I am; make no mistake about it—I'm booked."

"Don't talk like that! I've always known, of course, that your head isn't the strongest part of you, but I never guessed you were such a flat. Fancy going up in an aeroplane with a dare-devil like that Launcelot King! Jehoshaphat!"

He put his hands into his trousers pockets, leaned back, stretched out his legs, and whistled—encouraging, as usual.

I went to the aerodrome with Bill Edwards. He's always been a pal of mine, and though he's fond of his fun, there's no one I'd sooner turn to if I was in a bit of a hole. Mr. King had given me his card—Bill and I went in by a private gate. There were some people—inside and out!

"Looks as if all London was here," said Bill, when we had picked our way at last through the thousands and thousands who were waiting to get a free view. "I wonder they let us in," he added, when presently we were through the gate.

"What do you mean, you silly snip? That was Mr. King's card I showed him—'Admit Mr. Briggs and friends.'"

"Yes, I dare say; that's what it made itself out to be. But my idea was that it wasn't his card at all—that someone had been having a lark with you."

Something of that sort had been in my head. The more I thought of it the more I wondered how a gentleman like Launcelot King had come to be at Mrs. Wilkinson's, especially picked up promiscuous, as it seemed, by a silly ass like Arthur Brown. However, presently, as we were making our way through the crowd which was standing round the fenced-off piece of ground in which we could see the aeroplane, a voice sang out:—

"Good afternoon, Mr. Briggs. I was just beginning to wonder if you were going to desert me."

The party speaking was dressed in as queer a set of togs as ever I saw, tight-fitting leather all over—hands and head and face and all. I should never have known who he was from Adam if it had not been for his voice, and that was Mr. King's.

"How are you feeling? Fit to fly round the world?"

"I'm feeling pretty fair to middling, thank you; but I don't know about flying round the world. I doubt if I could spare the time."

He laughed as if I had made a joke. I didn't feel like joking; I admit it right out. The sight of him, in that rig, and all those people, and the aeroplane, and something that was in the air, gave me qualms. I felt, somehow, shaky about the knees. If I had had a chance it wouldn't have taken much to make me cut and run. Mr. King was looking at Bill Edwards.

"A friend of yours, Mr. Briggs? Would he like to try what flying is like? I might be able to oblige him if he would."

"No," said Bill, very short and sharp; "I should not. I'm not what you might call adventurous—at least, not in that direction. When it comes to flying, looking on is quite good enough for me."

Mr. King laughed again, as if he had made a joke.

"There are plenty of people of your opinion, and there are probably nearly as many who would give a good deal to have the chance of taking Mr. Briggs's place this afternoon."

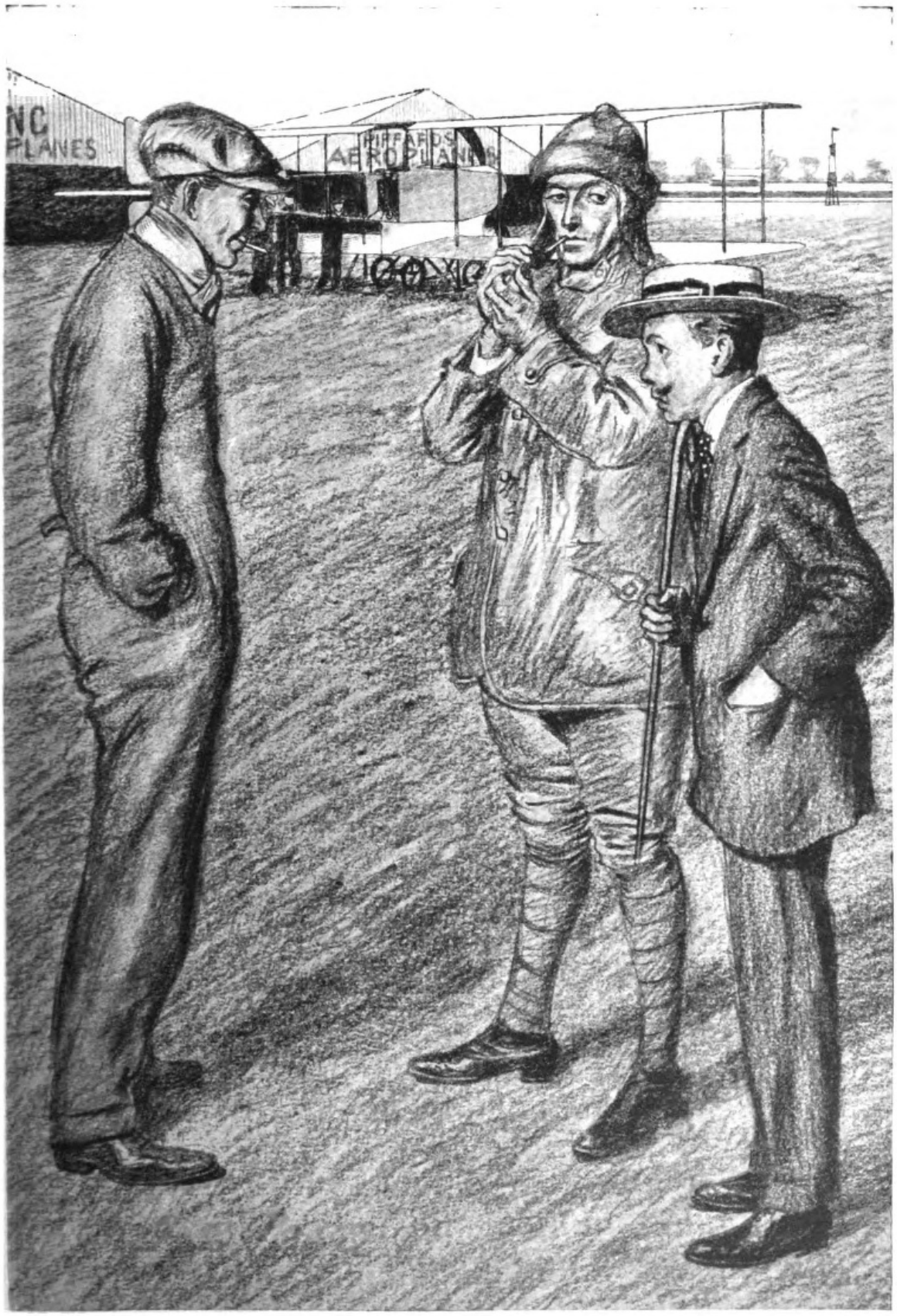
"So far as I'm concerned," Bill replied, "let them. I only hope Briggs will be of that opinion by the time he's done."

Mr. King laughed again—he seemed to be quite a hand at laughing. He said to me:—

"Your friend's a pessimist. Come along, Mr. Briggs; we'll see if we can find you something to wear. You know, it's colder up above than it is here, and I hope we're going to move at about a hundred miles an hour."

So I went with him—as I have seen it written somewhere—like a lamb to the slaughter. I don't know how a lamb feels, but if it feels queerer than I did I'm sorry for the lamb. It was all I could do to walk straight. When he got to a wooden-shed sort of place there was a man standing at the

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"SO THAT'S THE VICTIM, IS IT? YOU'VE CAUGHT HIM YOUNG."

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door. When he saw me he remarked to King :—

"So that's the victim, is it? You've caught him young."

Mr. King laughed as he observed :—

"Don't you talk greater nonsense than you can help. This gentleman is going up for a little amusement after his own heart—aren't you?"

"Maybe he is," went on the other man. "Fools step in—you know the rest. I hear you've been searching round for someone who would like to break his neck in your company; it doesn't look as if you had had much success if this is the only game you've bagged. I hope you've insured your life, young man, and that someone will benefit from what is going to happen to you. I don't know if you are aware that Mr. King talks about doing a series of loops right round the ground. In a breeze like this that will mean—you know the usual thing—placard for the evening papers, 'Another flying tragedy—at Wormwood Scrubs. Pilot and Passenger.' There being no more room on the placard, people are left to discover what became of that pilot and passenger for themselves."

"Cheerful sort of party, isn't he?" This was Mr. King, who, having got me into the shed, had shut the door against the other man, and was laughing again. "That's Lieutenant Moresby, one of the Aldershot crowd. He was to have flown this afternoon, but orders have come that in this breeze he's not to tempt Providence, so he's a little sour—that's what's the matter with him. I think that little lot will about suit you."

"That little lot" consisted of trousers and a sort of tunic, leather outside, thickly lined with wool within. Considering that the weather was roasting hot and I was perspiring all over, it looked as if things like those weren't wanted. But I wasn't my own master; I couldn't have argued the question if I'd tried. He put me into them somehow; then he started raking out what he called a helmet. A nice-looking article that was; by the time he'd got it on my head I bet I looked a sight. It covered me all over, it did, ears and all—all the lot of me, except my eyes and my nose and my mouth. I thought I should have dropped down with the heat, to say nothing of that floppy sort of feeling at the knees. It was just as if I hadn't any bones in my body which could hold me straight; and as for talking, I don't believe I could have uttered a long sentence if you had offered me a dollar. Presently he said :—

"Now then, Briggs, we're ready. All you want is these goggles. You must have some protection for the eyes in a job like this."

I had heard of goggles, but I don't believe I had seen a pair before, not close to, and certainly not a pair like that. Great things they were—he fastened them somehow at the back of my head, pretty tight. What little part of my face had been bare they covered up, and more. Big they were for me, and some of the flaps went over the helmet. So there I was with two thicknesses of leather and two of padded wool—covered an inch thick, I was, with the thermometer above boiling point! I could see that I was in for a nice afternoon.

"You look a picture, Briggs—the character. To look at you anyone would think you had been piloting an aeroplane all your life."

I knew he was laughing at me—he seemed to have a trick of laughing at everyone and everything. But I had to bear it without even pretending to grin.

He took me straight from the shed to the aeroplane, a distance of only a few yards. I thought in a muddled sort of way about what I'd read of how they take a murderer from the condemned cell to the gallows—sometimes just outside the door. That aeroplane was to me very much like the gallows that afternoon. I can't describe the state I was in. Words wouldn't do it justice—not the sort of words I can lay my pen to. I was sort of dazed—I couldn't even think. I don't believe I clearly realized where I was, or what I was going to do. I feel the heat more than most—and how I did feel it then! I was just a moving mass of perspiration. I had a kind of dim notion that my mother might be somewhere in the crowd, and Louisa, and Bill Edwards, and the rest of them. Perhaps at that moment they were looking at me. If they'd only been able to see inside me they would have had a shock. Perhaps Dora Wilkinson was there—that I did think was hard. It was through her I was where I was—I had that in my mind all the time.

When I was young I used to recite a poem called "The Glove." It was about King Francis—though I never knew who he was, except that I had a sort of idea that he wasn't English. There were a lot of lions fighting in a sort of circus, and he sat looking on and enjoying seeing them tearing each other to pieces—a nice kind of a king he must have been! There was a young woman looking on, and by her was her lover—I forget his name, but I know he was a knight. All at once she thought she'd show him off, so she dropped her glove into the circus, right bang

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in the middle of the lions—it must have been a good throw from where she was sitting—and she tipped her lover the wink. He bowed. With a single bound he leaped among the roaring, raging beasts.

> The leap was quick, return was quick,
> As he regained his place——

The words of the poem came back to me when I thought of Dora Wilkinson. Then, just as she was thinking that now was her chance to show him off, and how people would envy her because she'd got such a brave knight all to herself—

> He threw the glove, but not with love,
> Right in the lady's face.

My word! that must have been a surprise for her. King Francis got up and told her straight, plain as plain, that it served her right—I forget the exact words he used, but that's what they came to. And so it did serve her right! Any young woman who risked her young man's life just for the fun and the glory of showing people what a fine young man she'd got, it would serve her right if he threw something in her face, and turned on his heel and walked away. If I came out of this alive, I told myself, deep down in my perspiring breast, I'd show Dora Wilkinson what I thought of her.

"You see, Mr. Briggs, you sit here."

While I'd been thinking things we had got to the aeroplane and were standing alongside of it, and Launcelot King was pointing out where I had to sit. He made it all quite plain, in the cheery sort of way he had.

"There's not the slightest risk of your falling out, but in case anything should happen while we're looping the loop, here's a strap to make you fast to your seat. These are to put the toes of your boots in, and these handles by the sides of your seat are for you to hold on to—for instance, when you're upside down. With them you'll be as safe as if you were in your bed. Time's nearly up. Jump in!"

I jumped in—that is, I as nearly jumped as I could considering the condition I was in. I never once tried to run, I never even once looked round; I defy anyone to say that I tried to bolt. Weighed down as I was with that lot of leather goods, I couldn't have bolted even if I'd tried—which was perhaps one reason why I didn't try. I just tumbled into the aeroplane as well as I could, and got on to the seat, and Mr. King, he fastened me in. I thought of the "chair" in America which they fasten people in when they're going to electrocute them. I wondered if those chaps felt like I did when Mr. King buckled that strap tightly round me. I closed my eyes—not that I could see anything through those goggles when I'd got them open—but I just closed them, which will show the terrible state of mind I was in. Then Mr. King got into another seat in front, something happened to something—something which made a noise. Mr. King said to me:—

"Look out, Briggs!" Then to someone else, "Let her go!"

And, my word! that aeroplane began to move. Never shall I be able to give anyone any idea of what it felt like. The noise got ever so much worse; I opened my eyes in a hurry; I could just see enough through the goggles to know that we had left the ground, which was my natural home, and were mounting up to heaven. I gave a sort of start—I had to.

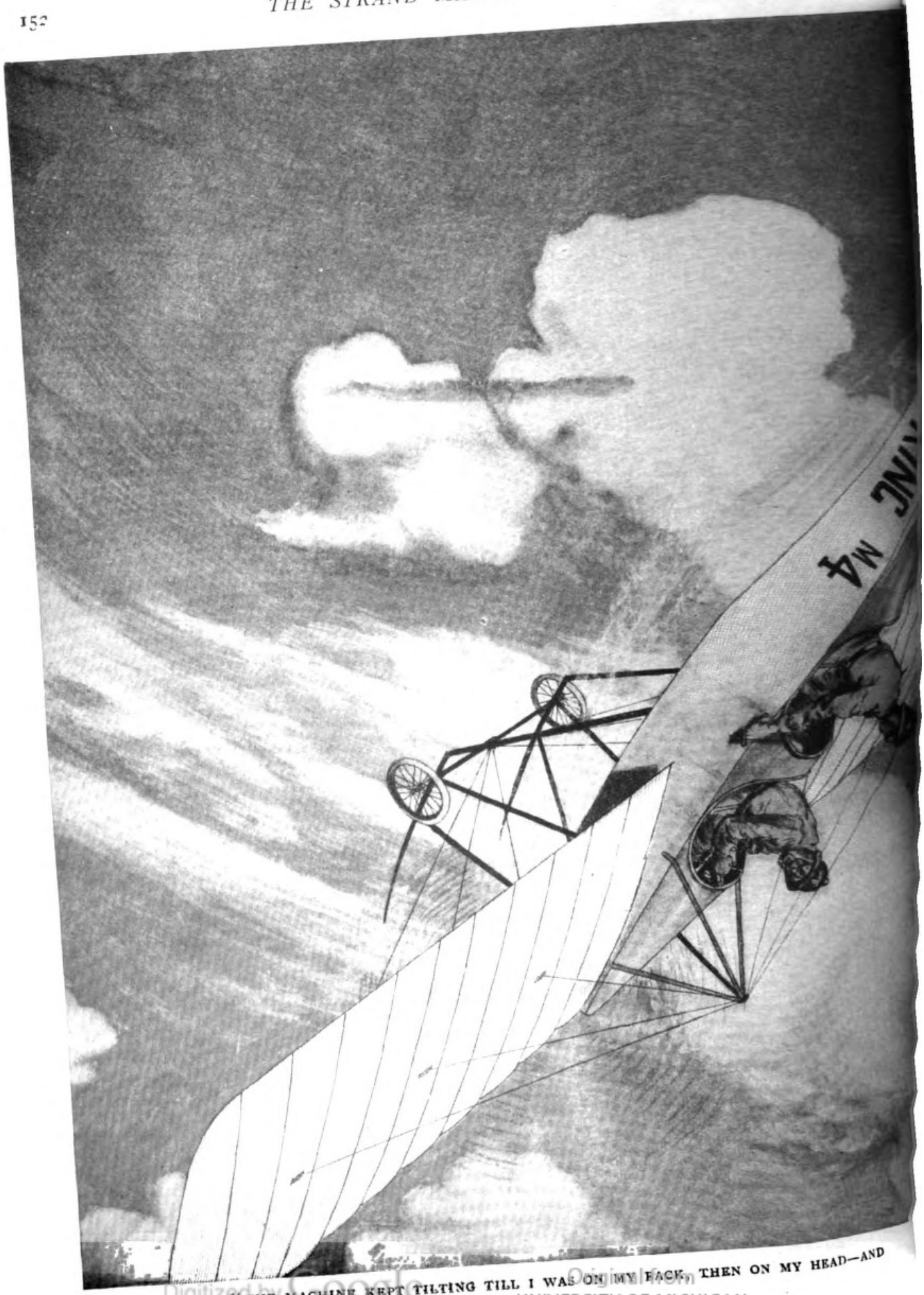
"Look out, Briggs!" yelled King, bawling so loud that I could hear him in spite of the frightful din. "Don't move! Keep steady! She's moving like a bird."

I didn't know about birds—they are as Nature made them, they were built to fly. Men weren't—I knew that the moment we were off the ground. It was no use concealing it—I would have given the fiver he had promised me to be back again. Bless that Dora Wilkinson!

It is no use asking me to attempt to describe what happened; I could not do it even for a hatful of money. All I can say is that it did not feel in the least as I thought it would. In a sort of a kind of a way, generally speaking, there was not any feeling about it at all. If I had not known that we were flying I doubt if I should have guessed it. There was the air against my face—plenty of it; the noise of the engine—you never heard such a row—and the smell of it—at least, I suppose it was what I smelt; I know I smelt something. And every now and again there was a sort of, I should call it, swirling motion, not offensive or unpleasant, but just as though you were slipping round something on nothing at all. Somehow it reminded me of what I used to feel on a swing; but, contrary to what I expected, there was no jerk, or anything of that kind—just a sort of a kind of a—as I should term it—feeling of rushing through space. I should fancy that that's the sort of feeling a stone has when it's shot from a catapult.

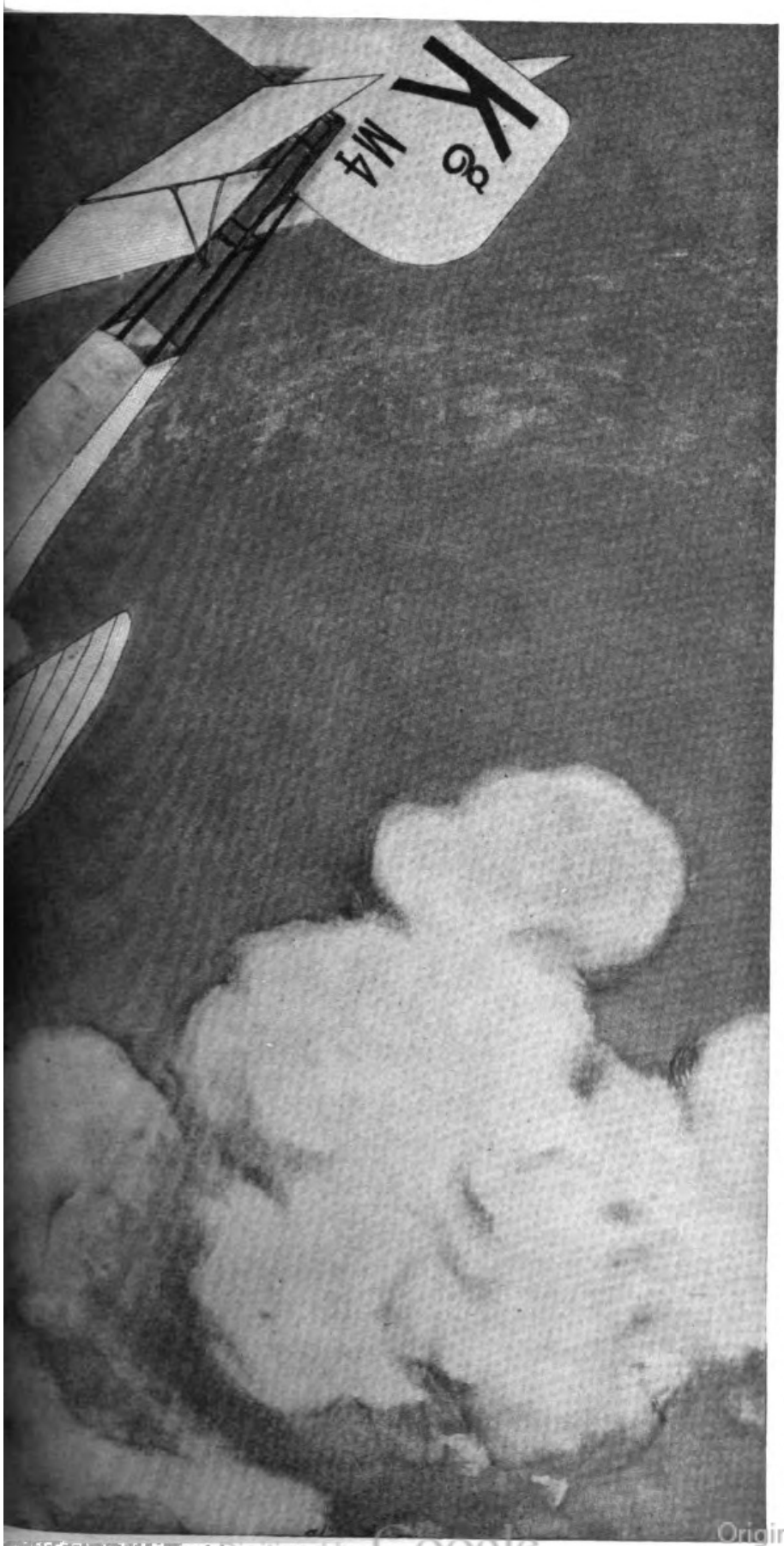
I was told afterwards that during those first few minutes we went round and round the aerodrome, doing all sorts of things as we went; going up and down—"vol-planing," they call it, I've been given to understand;

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"THE MACHINE KEPT TILTING TILL I WAS ON MY BACK, THEN ON MY HEAD—AND

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THEN GOODNESS ALONE KNOWS WHERE I WAS."

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mounting up in spirals, sliding down again, going along in a series of curves, and I don't know what besides. Very pretty it was to look at, they told me; very wonderful. I dare say it was. But I just kept my eyes shut and hung on to my seat, to which I was strapped, and knew nothing at all about it.

"What do you think of it?" bellowed King all of a sudden. He had a trick, I found, of doing something to the engine which made the noise a little less, so that when he bellowed you could hear what he said. "How are you feeling? We've been twice round the ground. Isn't this the sort of thing that does good to your soul?"

I don't know about my soul; I can only say it didn't do good to my stomach, especially just then, when the bottom seemed to have dropped out of something, and we began to go down as if there was nothing there to hold us up.

"Good Lord!" I screamed — I do not mind admitting that I screamed. "What's up? We're falling!"

"'Dipping,' Mr. Briggs, 'dipping,' just to let them see how it's done. Now we're going to 'mount,' to let them see how that's done, right up to the sky. Now for it!"

I don't know what he did—I didn't once know what he did to anything—but he did something; I was tilted a little back, and

up we began to go—up and up and up. That was the queerest feeling, that was; it took my breath away. Presently he hollered out:—

"We're nearly a mile up, Mr. Briggs—now we're over a mile. If you look down you'll see the people like black spots beneath us. Steady! Hold on! We're going to loop the loop."

So ignorant was I about flying that I didn't even know what looping the loop was, until, in a manner of speaking, I actually did it. Again he did something to the car; it turned, tipped a little forward from the back, went so fast that the air struck cold, in spite of the way I was padded, and then—I've been asked more than once to describe what it felt like, but I simply couldn't do it. This is fact, not fiction, this is. I know that the machine seemed to tilt back again—kept tilting till I was on my back, then on my head—and then goodness alone knows where I was.

"Loop number one!" shrieked a voice.

I know it was Mr. King's voice; I know he shrieked. I could not see him, and I was only just able to make out his words. At that time I didn't know what he meant—I only sort of wondered if I was still alive. Then on we went with another rush, and then it all happened all over again—back and back and back I went, till, as far as I could judge, I had been turned right round. It was all done so quickly that at the time I could not tell just what had been done; then, before I could decide, on we whirled with another rush.

I cannot say how often the trick was done. I have been told that we looped the loop more than a dozen times. We might have done it two hundred for all I could tell. By the time we had finished I was all in pieces, believe it or believe it not; the inside seemed to have been taken right out of me. I was in such a state I didn't know which end of me was up. I knew then why I had been strapped to the seat. I had sense enough not to leave go of the handles, or I don't know what mightn't have happened, in spite of the straps. We were on the whirl again when Mr. King bellowed—I'm told that his voice was heard below:—

"There, Mr. Briggs, that's a record. You've been making history. Now look out for yourself—we're going down."

It was all very well for him to talk about looking out for myself. The whole thing had nothing to do with me—nothing could be more certain than that.

The next thing I know—it is about the only thing I really did know—is that all of a sudden there were shouts and yells, and a regular hullabaloo, and a bump, and people came crowding round the car; and then I realized—mistily, so to speak—that we were back again on the solid ground, and that the crowd was rushing forward and yelled themselves hoarse with their hurrahs and their applause, and we were greeted as heroes.

Heroes! Yes, that's the word! The crowd would have it that I was a hero, and I've never contradicted the statement—not once. And I'm not sure I was a hero when I come to think of it. Anyhow, people had got it into their heads that I was a hero; and when a girl—I won't say to speak of the inferior sex only, because there may be some of them who are equal to men—has got a thing like that into her head it's not easy to get it out again—so there you are!

Dora Wilkinson, to use what I've heard described as an idiom, was simply all over me. That girl would have kissed my boots if I'd asked her, so full of admiration she was of my heroic qualities. Oh, yes, she was. I know what I'm talking about—no one better.

And I did not throw my glove in her face, like the knight who jumped into the circus. No, I might have done, but I did not; I've a tenderer heart than he had. Instead, I changed that fiver, which Mr. King forked up all right. And I took her to the movies. There was a picture there which was called "Out of the Jaws of Death." And when it began Dora took me by the hand, and she put up her handkerchief and she wiped her eyes. Then I knew that she was thinking of me. The very title of that picture touched her on the spot. It touched me, too. It was about a fireman who walked up ten flights of stairs in a burning house to save a kitten which someone had left behind.

"Oh, Mr. Briggs," she said, when the film was done and the people were clapping, "what it must feel like to be a hero."

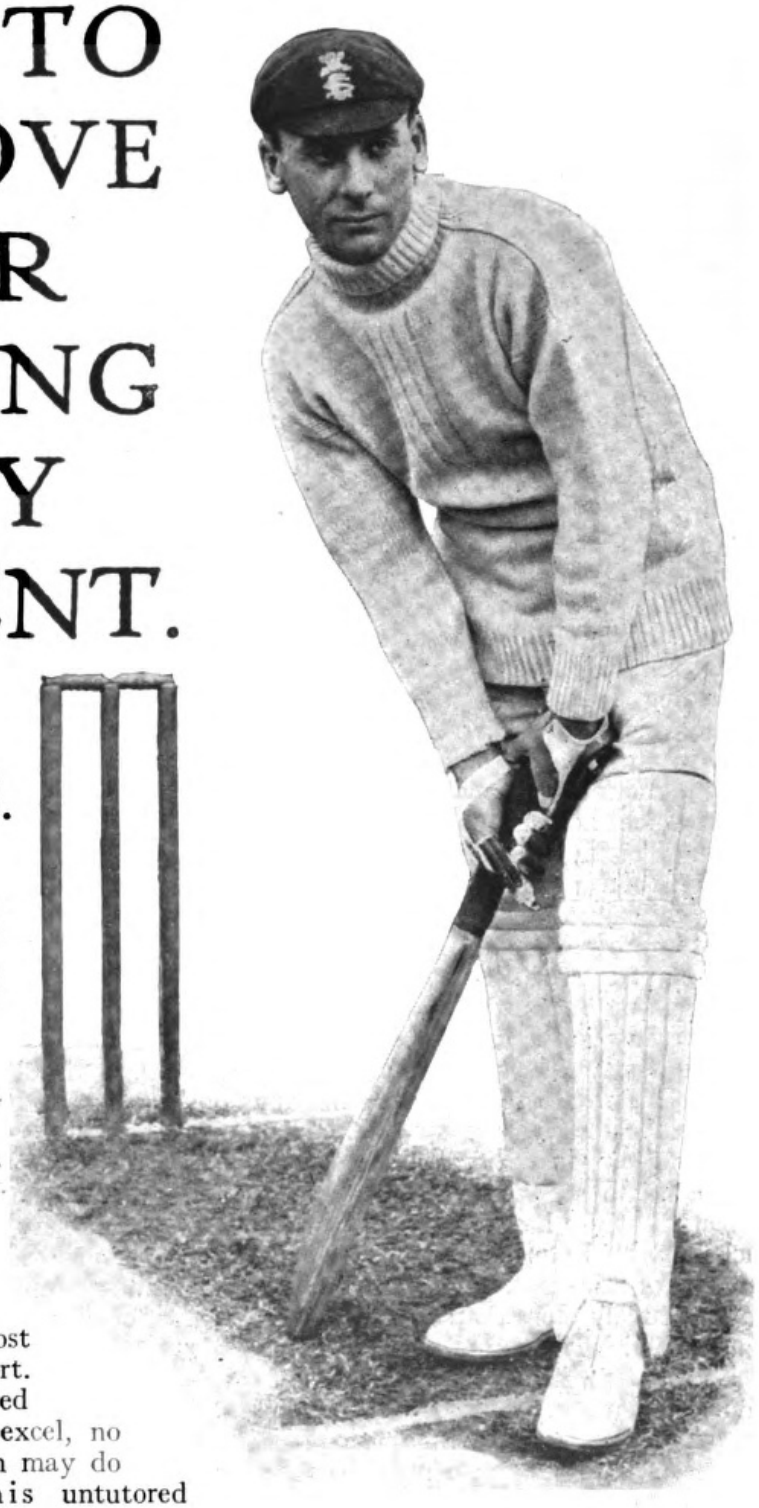
I said nothing, but I squeezed her hand like she'd squeezed mine. And after the show was over I took her to a restaurant I know, and she had three mixed ices and two bath buns.

"Never," she told me as she was enjoying them, "shall I forget this Bank Holiday as long as ever I live."

I made no remark, because at that moment I was looking at the evening paper, in which it mentioned that Mr. Briggs had been Mr. King's companion in the wonderful daring feats he had performed that afternoon, and went on to as good as hint that of such stuff are our noblest spirits made.

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# HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR BATTING FIFTY PER CENT.



By
J. B. HOBBS.

IN my opinion, batting is decidedly the phase of cricket which offers a player the greatest scope for self-improvement. First-class bowlers are much more born than made, and the same may be said of super-excellent fieldsmen, although a certain degree of skill at fielding is natural to the young and agile, and improvement is almost entirely a matter of keen effort. But batting cannot be improved by a mere eager desire to excel, no matter how thoroughly a man may do his untutored best. Put a bat in his hand and leave him to himself, and unless he is one in ten thousand he will do nothing except contract bad habits and worse style.



"BAD HABITS AND WORSE STYLE."

This "leaving men to themselves" accounts for the very moderate form displayed by a great number of amateur batsmen. These are the men whose batting can be improved fifty per cent. if they "mark, learn, and inwardly digest" what I have to say in this article. The man who has been well coached by experts has nothing much to learn about handling a bat which can be put on paper,

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but he is in the decided minority, and it is to the majority that I appeal. Batsmen who have seldom done anything beyond trying to make runs in their own way can improve even more than fifty per cent. if they will make an honest attempt to handle the willow in the manner I shall describe.

The first thing they must fix in their minds is that almost every action with a bat which can be called "real cricket" is not the natural action of a human being. It is artificial, and yet must be so constantly practised that art becomes second nature. This point is vital, and no progress can be made until it is thoroughly grasped and understood. In practice it works out to this—a batsman's mind is fully occupied at the wicket in gauging the type of ball he has to meet, and deciding upon the best method of dealing with it—there is no time in which to create an entirely fresh mental process on purpose to set in motion the muscles and limbs which actually make the stroke. This must be reduced by practice to a process which is almost mechanical, or a batsman cannot improve. He must have, so to speak, ready-made sets of actions perfected to deal with any sort of ball the bowler may deliver, and be ready on the instant to apply without hesitation just that set of actions his judgment tells him are required to score runs or save his wicket.



"AN OPEN SPACE BETWEEN HIS BAT AND HIS LEGS."

"Quite so," the critic may remark. "But what is the use of throwing such a counsel of perfection at the head of the man who plays cricket every Saturday, with an occasional half-day of mid-week cricket, and an all-day match scarcely more than two or three times in a season? There are tens of thousands of such cricketers, just the men who need your advice, but they cannot hope to memorize every stroke possible in a game of cricket." I agree, and will confine myself to general principles and examples wide in their application.

I do not mind a great deal how a man stands at the wicket while the bowler is running up to deliver the ball. Any reasonable pose which suits him best, and enables him to see the ball from the moment it leaves the bowler's hand, will do well enough; always provided it places the right foot behind the popping-crease and does not throw the weight of the body on the left leg. An ideal pose is an excellent thing, no doubt, but nothing is gained by straining after it. A batsman can very well afford to let Mother Nature have her way when deciding the position he adopts before the ball is bowled, if the attitude he takes up does not infringe the general conditions I have laid down. A similar latitude may be allowed in taking guard. "Middle" or "middle and leg," or even "leg stump," can be left to the individual fancy, but if he is inclined to favour "middle and off," or even "off stump," a batsman should remember he is apt to step needlessly in front of his wicket or else to leave an open space between his bat and his legs—the latter a fruitful cause of disaster, if only because the ball has plenty of room to cannon off the batsman's pads into his wicket. The essential point is that this preliminary attitude should be free from the least tendency towards rigidity. If a batsman does not feel perfectly easy and comfortable as he stands, bat in hand, waiting for the ball to be delivered, he must experiment until he ascertains the stance which suits his own physical characteristics.

Having placed himself in an easy but not too unorthodox attitude, a batsman should feel that every muscle in his body is supple and ready, and that not so much as a single finger is stiff and tense. Standing thus, with the bat grasped firmly but not too strongly, the right hand somewhere about the middle of the handle, the batsman should be quite at home and ready for anything the bowler may send him. As soon as he can see the type of ball he has to deal with, the first thing he must decide is whether he will play it or hit it for runs. It is possible to do both in the one stroke, and batsmen who could be mentioned have a knack of "playing" forward quite as forcibly as some people drive a ball when they hit as hard as they can. But the ordinary batsman is only safe if he resolves to play balls he fears may hit his wicket, and attempts to score only off those deliveries which if clean missed will not end his innings. The golden rule in playing a ball is to keep the bat straight and the handle always so far forward that the stroke cannot send the ball up for a catch. The way to do this is to remember to keep the left shoulder from dropping and the left hand and elbow from pulling the bat into a slanting position across the wicket the instant the stroke is made. But the position of the feet

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really settles these points. If a man shifts his right foot in the direction of short-leg when a straight fast ball of good length is coming along, he will need to be a first-class contortionist if he is to bring a straight bat to bear on the ball. He should advance his left foot and play the ball forward, keeping the bat perfectly straight all the time.



"A FIRST-CLASS CONTORTIONIST."

He cannot do this unless the backward lift which gives impetus for the forward stroke is straight and true. And here let me caution players against the habit of waggling the bat about while the bowler is running up to deliver the ball. One straight lift clean back is the right idea, and the less preliminary flourishing there is the better. A slight play of the bat, just a few quick swings, scarcely more than inches in length and quite straight, will do no harm, and may help by making the batsman feel more alive and ready for the stroke. But anything more than this is a needless distraction which must be scrupulously avoided. As soon as the backward swing is complete the left foot must be thrown freely forward and the bat swung down perfectly straight, so that it meets the ball just in front of the striker's left leg. If the bat is pushed out farther than this before meeting the ball the result is a poky kind of stroke with no power in it, which often has a decided tendency to put the ball up. Avoid advancing the left leg too far when playing forward—it is neither pretty nor cricket to stretch out like a bayonet-fighter who has to put all the reach he can into one mighty thrust. Always strive to get the ball well on the middle of the bat when playing forward, and this can only be done well by judging correctly the line of the ball. No man can see the bat hit the ball when he plays forward, so it is very easy to understand why forward play makes such a great demand on judgment.



"LIKE A BAYONET-FIGHTER."

It is also a very good reason against over-doing forward play, especially on wickets other than first-class. On the best wickets, when sun and rain have not conspired to help the bowler, forward play is both safe and easy. But such wickets too seldom fall to the lot of those to whom this article is specially addressed, and they must be told that on wickets which help the bowler it is only too easy to carry forward play to excess. In fact, I think there is so much in this point that the average batsman would do well to pay rather more attention to back play than forward play. And if he intends to play back in accordance with modern methods he must move his right foot back in an oblique direction towards the wicket before the ball pitches, and get ready to make his stroke practically in front of his body. This is dead against that dear old law of the game which tied the right foot to a peg, except when it was moved to cut a ball; but in spite of the fine back play accomplished by cricket giants of the past without ever moving the right foot, I must contend that the modern idea is best, even for born batsmen, and is even more to be preferred by those who were not brought into the world to shine in county or Test-Match cricket. Against almost any bowling on a dead wicket, and against slow to medium bowling on all wickets, the man who makes back play his pet idea has the tremendous advantage of being able to watch the ball right on to the bat. He can make every allowance for what it may do as it comes off the pitch, and can thus deal with ball after ball with certainty which he could only grope after if he played forward all the time.



PLAYING BACK.

There is a stroke, called the "half-cock stroke," which is a species of compromise between forward and back play, and a very useful stroke it is on occasion. The great

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and only W. G. Grace played it many a time and oft when in his prime, and no more need be said in favour of it. It is brought into action when a player finds himself too far committed to a forward stroke to draw back and yet feels sure that the ball is not one he should play forward at. This finds him in two minds—a very dangerous condition for a cricketer — and the only way out is to stop his bat midway in the forward swing which marks the forward stroke and, by holding it still and perfectly upright, cover his wicket with the whole length and breadth of the willow. Then the ball will hit the bat and, with the exception of the leg-glance, it is as well to note that this is the only stroke in cricket in which it is the right game to allow the ball to hit the bat instead of the bat hitting the ball.

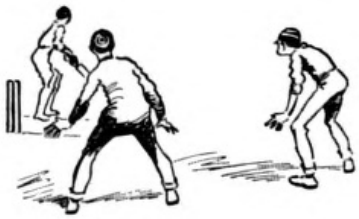


THE CUT.

By now the defensive armour of our batsman is complete, and if he keeps his bat straight and plays forward, back, or "half-cock" according to the state of the wicket and the pace and length of the bowling, he will soon develop into an extremely difficult customer to dislodge—but he will make precious few runs.

There is a maxim which asserts that, provided a batsman remains long enough at the wicket, runs will come by themselves, but I should be very sorry indeed to commend this as an ideal worthy of any cricketer, and it is about the last maxim in the world the afternoon performer should pin his faith to. He must make runs, and to do this must master scoring-strokes. Here I am inclined to allow him a great deal more latitude as regards strokes than can be permitted in defence. If he can bat straight enough to keep good balls from spoiling the shape of his wicket, he may cultivate pet scoring-strokes of his own, provided they are not of the uppish or risky type. Suppose, for example, he has a good reach, a useful hand and eye, and plenty of strength. Such a player may well be fond of pulling a ball bang round from the off to the on, or even to square leg, greatly to the disgust of both the bowler and the cricket purist of the old school. It is not for me to say that such hefty pulling is the prettiest sight in cricket ; but if it is natural to a man he had far better do it than make painful attempts to perfect off-strokes for which he has no gift or liking. But he should get well over the ball when he steps across the wicket for pulling, and must make sure that his bat is well outside the ball when he swings for his smite. Bowling breaking from the off is the kind which suits the hardened exponent of the pull, and against such bowling I advise any man who likes the stroke to pull as hard and often as he can—all along the "floor," please, and do not drop the right shoulder, or the bat will have a tendency to get under the ball and, instead of a boundary, mid-on will be presented with a catch, probably of the skier variety.

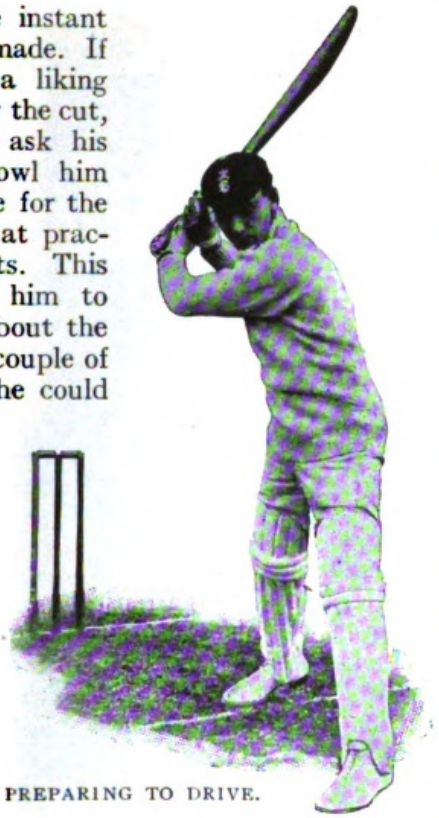
If, however, a batsman is more ambitious, and desires to make off-strokes in accordance with the established traditions of the game, I have nothing but praise for such a commendable resolution. The cut is generally the first stroke mentioned when off-play is discussed, and following this precedent I feel compelled to say something about this most fascinating yet baffling stroke. The cut is a very difficult topic to deal with, simply because if a man can cut a ball the stroke will come natural to him, but if he has no natural aptitude for it no amount of coaching will ever give him even a tolerable proficiency. A good eye and wrist, and the gift of timing a ball to perfection—these must be present, or to cut a ball is impossible. The mechanism of the stroke is simple enough. When the right ball comes along to the off fairly fast on a good wicket—the cut is out of cricket on a slow pitch —the right foot is thrown across the wicket, and with a downward flick of the bat—a stroke with more wrist than anything else in it—the ball is cut anywhere from straight past point to fine through the slips, the direction varying according to the position of



"LIKE SPIDERS WAITING FOR A FLY."

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the ball the instant the stroke is made. If a man has a liking and a gift for the cut, he ought to ask his friends to bowl him balls suitable for the stroke when at practice in the nets. This will enable him to learn more about the stroke in a couple of weeks than he could pick up in a whole season of promiscuous practice.



PREPARING TO DRIVE.

If a man is forced to conclude that he cannot cut a ball, he need not despair, not even of making a century in county cricket. But he must decide once and for all not to dally with the stroke. There must be no "hanging the bat out to dry" on the off-side of the wicket on the chance of bringing off the "if" stroke. Such play makes all the slip fieldsmen feel like spiders waiting for a fly whose wings can be heard buzzing near their net. No; if a man cannot make that true cut which sends the right foot across the wicket, he must rule the stroke clean out of his game, and set about perfecting an effective substitute. He should try what has been called "the cut with the left foot," a stroke made by throwing the left foot both across the wicket and a little forward and hitting the ball hard just as it is passing his body. This stroke is not anything like so "wristy" and pretty as the cut proper, but as it enables a batsman to get infinitely more arm and even shoulder play to work, it is quite a good hit for a man whose wrist is not strong and supple enough to bring the cut proper into his list of scoring strokes. Played properly, this stroke cracks the ball away at a rare pace, and is safe enough every time, provided care is taken to get nicely over the ball. But this must not be overdone, or the ball may be simply punched hard almost straight on to the ground. At any rate, this shot to the off, made by moving the left foot at a ball which might be cut by moving the right foot, is an alternative which demands careful attention and practice from any batsman who knows his own limitations well enough to feel sure that the cut is no stroke for him. The stroke is really a half cut, half drive, and is best brought into execution to score off a ball pitched rather short and fairly wide of the wicket.

The drive is the next stroke I propose to discuss, and as regards its action, I may say at once that any drive is a forward stroke played with more freedom and vigour than is the case when forward play for purely defensive purposes is the idea. Some players bat so freely that it is difficult to say when their forward play ceases and their driving begins. But the man whose batting stands in need of improvement to any considerable extent will find that the drive calls for a special effort. The backward lift of the bat must be more decided, and the stroke altogether more determined and resolute than that which suffices for his forward play. And when he sets out to drive, a batsman must remember that he has to get to the pitch of the ball. If the bowler has been good enough to pitch one up far enough, the batsman simply stays at home and drives it without moving from his ground; but if the ball is a little too short, the batsman must get out to it and catch it on the pitch. And if he does run out to drive the batsman must consider the wicket-keeper as dead for the time being, as nothing can be more fatal than a half-hearted attempt to dash out and drive.

Another point which applies to all drives is that the ball must travel in the direction in which the batsman's arm and shoulder are pointing at the instant the stroke is made. This means that the left leg must be thrown forward somewhat to the right for an off-drive, to the left for an on-drive; it is only thrown straight forward when a straight ball the correct length for driving happens



A STROKE TO LEG.

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to come along. It is important to note this advice, as batsmen who play with a straight enough bat on the defensive are apt to throw their left leg straight forward when attempting to drive a ball pitched off the wicket. The result is one of three things—either a clean miss, a stroke with no power in it, or a sliced kind of hit which puts up a catch with plenty of spin on it.

Leg-hitting in the very best cricket is seldom or never seen nowadays. Modern wickets and bowling are both too accurate for the real old-fashioned smite to leg to be seen, except at the rarest intervals, in first-class play. But both wickets and bowlers provide chances on the leg-side to batsmen of the type this article is written to help, and when they see a nice ball on the leg-side coming along they should advance the left leg and make a lusty hit, with the bat held at just the angle which experience has taught them is best adapted to their own style.

The prettiest leg-hit brings a nearly perpendicular bat to bear on the ball as it flashes past, but there is a very effective species of sweep to leg made with the bat held almost as a mower holds a scythe. And if a man finds he can score runs with the "sweep," but cannot rely on the more elegant stroke — well, my advice to him is, "Score runs, elegantly if you can, but score runs." He cannot do this, I may say, unless he brings his head and body well round when hitting to leg. It is, however, wrong to put so much into it that the right foot is dragged over the crease, because this throws the batsman off his balance and spoils the accuracy of the stroke, to say nothing of the chance of being stumped, a rather remote contingency, I admit, as wicket-keepers who can gather a leg-ball rapidly and neatly enough to stump a man are not often seen operating behind batsmen whose game can be improved fifty per cent.



THE HOOK STROKE.

The glance to leg is a stroke which scores plenty of runs, and is as simple as you like in theory. It is made by simply holding the bat obliquely in front of the ball, and allowing the leather to hit the bat and slip off in the direction of fine leg. A fastish bowler, with a natural off-break, is helpful when this stroke is exploited, and a good-length ball from a bowler of this type, which pitches either in line with the leg-stump or just outside it, can be glanced to leg with great effect. It is possible enough to serve even a good-length straight ball in this way, but if my readers are guided by me they will always present the whole width of the bat to such a delivery. Nerve and judgment are the qualities most in demand when it comes to glancing a ball, and the stroke is one which has special points to recommend it to batsmen whose defence is sound, but whose style is rather cramped as regards scoring-strokes. I should not call it easy—far from it—but any ordinary cricketer who fancies the glance to leg and practises it consistently should find it a valuable means of adding to his score.

Back play for scoring purposes is not nearly so difficult as is generally supposed, and the hook is by far the most profitable stroke to exploit in this department of the game. To hook a ball properly a man should step back with his right foot towards his wicket, and, with a quick action of the right forearm and wrist, the left hand acting as a guide only, clip the ball round to the on with a horizontal bat. The beauty of this stroke, as in all back play, is that the ball can be watched right on to the blade of the bat, and if at the last possible fraction of time a scoring-stroke does not appear safe or feasible, it is the easiest thing in the world to change the direction of the bat and play the ball in the usual way. A ball must be destitute of break or else breaking from the off if it is to be hooked successfully, as the golden rule which tells a batsman never to try to score against the break of a ball applies with particular force to the hook stroke. It is possible to do amazing things with the hook, but the best ball for it is one a little short, made shorter still by the backward step, and breaking from the off. Such a ball, even if fairly fast, can be hooked with impunity, but the faster it is the greater will be the demand on the eye and pluck of the batsman. Really fast bowling on a good wicket cannot be hooked by ordinary mortals, nor can they play back to such trundling, but with this exception back play and the hook stroke will prove both pleasant and profitable to the batsman who wants to improve his game by fifty per cent.

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# STEPPING BACKWARDS



BY

**W·W·JACOBS**

Illustrated by Will Owen.



"WONDERFUL improvement," said Mr. Jack Mills. "Show 'em to me again."

Mr. Simpson took his pipe from his mouth and, parting his lips, revealed his new teeth.

"And you talk better," said Mr. Mills, taking his glass from the counter and emptying it; "you ain't got that silly lisp you used to have. What does your missis think of 'em?"

"She hasn't seen 'em yet," said the other. "I had 'em put in at dinner-time. I ate my dinner with 'em."

Mr. Mills expressed his admiration. "If it wasn't for your white hair and whiskers you'd look thirty again," he said, slowly. "How old are you?"

"Fifty-three," said his friend. "If it wasn't for being laughed at, I've often thought of having my whiskers shaved off and my hair dyed black. People think I'm sixty."

"Or seventy," continued Mr. Mills. "What does it matter, people laughing? You've got a splendid head of 'air, and it would dye beautiful."

Mr. Simpson shook his head and, ordering a couple of glasses of bitter, attacked his in silence.

"It might be done gradual," he said, after a long interval. "It don't do anybody good at the warehouse to look old."

"Make a clean job of it," counselled Mr. Mills, who was very fond of a little cheap excitement. "Get it over and done with. You've got good features, and you'd look splendid clean-shaved."

Mr. Simpson smiled faintly.

"Only on Wednesday the barmaid here was asking after you," pursued Mr. Mills.

Mr. Simpson smiled again.

"She says to me, 'Where's Gran'pa?' she says, and when I says, haughty like, 'Who do you mean?' she says, 'Father Christmas!' If you was to tell her that you are only fifty-three, she'd laugh in your face."

"Let her laugh," said the other, sourly.

"Come out and get it off," said Mr. Mills, earnestly. "There's a barber's in Bird Street; you could go in the little back room, where he charges a penny more, and get it done without anybody being a bit the wiser."

He put his hand on Mr. Simpson's shoulder, and that gentleman, with a glare in the direction of the fair but unconscious offender, rose in a hypnotized fashion and followed him out. Twice on the way to Bird Street Mr. Simpson paused and said he had altered his mind, and twice did the propulsion of Mr. Mills's right hand, and his flattering argument, make him alter it again.

It was a matter of relief to Mr. Simpson that the barber took his instructions without any show of surprise. It appeared, indeed,

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that an elderly man of seventy-eight had enlisted his services for a similar purpose not two months before, and had got married six weeks afterwards. Age of the bride given as twenty-four, but said to have looked older.

A snip of the scissors, and six inches of white beard fell to the floor. For the first time in thirty years Mr. Simpson felt a razor on his face. Then his hair was cut and shampooed; and an hour later he sat gazing at a dark-haired, clean-shaven man in the glass who gazed back at him with wondering eyes—a lean-jawed, good-looking man, who, in a favourable light, might pass for forty. He turned and met the admiring eyes of Mr. Mills.

"What did I tell you?" inquired the latter. "You look young enough to be your own son."

"Or grandson," said the barber, with professional pride.

Mr. Simpson got up slowly from the chair and, accompanied by the admiring Mr. Mills, passed out into the street. The evening was young, and, at his friend's suggestion, they returned to the Plume of Feathers.

"You give the order," said Mr. Mills, "and see whether she recognizes you."

Mr. Simpson obeyed.

"Don't you know him?" inquired Mr. Mills, as the barmaid turned away.

"I don't think I have that pleasure," said the girl, simpering.

"Gran'pa's eldest boy," said Mr. Mills.

"Oh!" said the girl. "Well, I hope he's a better man than his father, then."

"What do you mean by that?" demanded Mr. Simpson, painfully conscious of his friend's regards.

"Nothing," said the girl, "nothing. Only we can all be better, can't we? He's a nice old gentleman; so simple."

"Don't know you from Adam," said Mr. Mills, as she turned away. "Now, if you ask me, I don't believe as your own missis will recognize you."

"Rubbish," said Mr. Simpson. "My wife would know me anywhere. We've been married over thirty years. Thirty years of sunshine and shadow together. You're a single man, and don't understand these things."

"P'r'aps you're right," said his friend. "But it'll be a bit of a shock to her, anyway. What do you say to me stepping round and breaking the news to her? It's a bit sudden, you know. She's expecting a white-haired old gentleman, not a black-haired boy."

Mr. Simpson looked a bit uneasy. "P'r'aps I ought to have told her first," he murmured, craning his neck to look in the glass at the back of the bar.

"I'll go and put it right for you," said his friend. "You stay here and smoke your pipe."

He stepped out briskly, but his pace slackened as he drew near the house.

"I—I—came—to see you about your husband," he faltered, as Mrs. Simpson opened the door and stood regarding him.

"What's the matter?" she exclaimed, with a faint cry. "What's happened to him?"

"Nothing," said Mr. Mills, hastily. "Nothing serious, that is. I just came round to warn you so that you will be able to know it's him."

Mrs. Simpson let off a shriek that set his ears tingling. Then, steadying herself by the wall, she tottered into the front room, followed by the discomfited Mr. Mills, and sank into a chair.

"He's dead!" she sobbed. "He's dead!"

"He is not," said Mr. Mills.

"Is he much hurt? Is he dying?" gasped Mrs. Simpson.

"Only his hair," said Mr. Mills, clutching at the opening. "He is not hurt at all."

Mrs. Simpson dabbed at her eyes and sat regarding him in bewilderment. Her twin chins were still quivering with emotion, but her eyes were beginning to harden. "What are you talking about?" she inquired, in a raspy voice.

"He's been to a hairdresser's," said Mr. Mills. "He's 'ad all his white whiskers cut off, and his hair cut short and dyed black. And, what with that and his new teeth, I thought—he thought—p'r'aps you mightn't know him when he came home."

"Dyed?" cried Mrs. Simpson, starting to her feet.

Mr. Mills nodded. "He looks twenty years younger," he said, with a smile. "He'd pass for his own son anywhere."

Mrs. Simpson's eyes snapped. "Perhaps he'd pass for *my* son," she remarked.

"Yes, easy," said the tactful Mr. Mills. "You can't think what a difference it's made to him. That's why I came to see you—so you shouldn't be startled."

"Thank you," said Mrs. Simpson. "I'm much obliged. But you might have spared yourself the trouble. I should know my husband anywhere."

"Ah, that's what you think," retorted Mr. Mills, with a smile; "but the barmaid at the



"MRS. SIMPSON LET OFF A SHRIEK THAT SET HIS EARS TINGLING."

Plume didn't. That's what made me come to you."

Mrs. Simpson gazed at him.

"I says to myself," continued Mr. Mills, "'If *she* don't know him, I'm certain his missis won't, and I'd better——'"

"You'd better go," interrupted his hostess.

Mr. Mills started, and then, with much dignity, stalked after her to the door.

"As to your story, I don't believe a word of it," said Mrs. Simpson. "Whatever else my husband is, he isn't a fool, and he'd no more think of cutting off his whiskers and dyeing his hair than you would of telling the truth."

"Seeing is believing," said the offended Mr. Mills, darkly.

"I'll wait till I do see, and then I sha'n't believe," was the reply. "It is a put-up job between you and some other precious idiot, I expect. But you can't deceive me. If your black-haired friend comes here, he'll get it, I can tell you."

She slammed the door on his protests and, returning to the parlour, gazed fiercely into the glass on the mantelpiece. It reflected sixteen stone of honest English womanhood, a thin wisp of yellowish-grey hair, and a pair of faded eyes peering through clumsy spectacles.

"Son, indeed!" she said, her lips quivering. "You wait till you come home, my lord!"

Mr. Simpson, with some forebodings, returned home an hour later. To a man who loved peace and quietness the report of the indignant Mr. Mills was not of a reassuring nature. He hesitated on the doorstep for a few seconds while he fumbled for his key, and then, humming unconcernedly, hung his hat in the passage and walked into the parlour.

The astonished scream of his wife warned him that Mr. Mills had by no means exaggerated. She rose from her seat and, crouching by the fireplace, regarded him with a mixture of anger and dismay.

"It—it's all right, Milly," said Mr. Simpson, with a smile that revealed a dazzling set of teeth.

"Who are you?" demanded Mrs. Simpson. "How dare you call me by my Christian name! It's a good job for you my husband is not here."

"He wouldn't hurt me," said Mr. Simpson, with an attempt at facetiousness. "He's the best friend I ever had. Why, we slept in the same cradle."

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"'I DON'T WANT ANY OF YOUR NONSENSE,' SAID MRS. SIMPSON. 'YOU GET OUT OF MY HOUSE BEFORE I SEND FOR THE POLICE.'"

"I don't want any of your nonsense," said Mrs. Simpson. "You get out of my house before I send for the police. How dare you come into a respectable woman's house in this fashion? Be off with you."

"Now, look here, Milly——" began Mr. Simpson.

His wife drew herself up to her full height of four feet eleven.

"I've had a hair-cut and a shave," pursued her husband; "also I've had my hair restored to its natural colour. But I'm the same man, and you know it."

"I know nothing of the kind," said his wife, doggedly. "I don't know you from Adam. I've never seen you before, and I don't want to see you again. You go away."

"I'm your husband, and my place is at home," replied Mr. Simpson. "A man can have a shave if he likes, can't he? Where's my supper?"

"Go on," said his wife. "Keep it up. But be careful my husband don't come in and catch you, that's all."

Mr. Simpson gazed at her fixedly, and then, with an impatient exclamation, walked into the small kitchen and began to set the supper. A joint of cold beef, a jar of pickles, bread, butter, and cheese made an appetizing display. Then he took a jug from the dresser and descended to the cellar.

A musical trickling fell on the ear of Mrs. Simpson as she stood at the parlour door, and drew her stealthily to the cellar. The key was in the lock, and, with a sudden movement, she closed the door and locked it. A sharp cry from Mr. Simpson testified to his discomfiture.

"Now I'm off for the police," cried his wife.

"Don't be a fool," shouted Mr. Simpson, tugging wildly at the door-handle. "Open the door."

Mrs. Simpson remained silent, and her husband resumed his efforts until the door-knob, unused to such treatment, came off in his hand. A sudden scrambling noise on the cellar stairs satisfied the listener that he had not pulled it off intentionally.

She stood for a few moments, considering. It was a stout door and opened inwards. She took her bonnet from its nail in the kitchen and, walking softly to the street door, set off to lay the case before a brother who lived a few doors away.

"Poor old Bill," said Mr. Cooper, when she

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had finished. "Still, it might be worse; he's got the barrel o' beer with him."

"It's not Bill," said Mrs. Simpson.

Mr. Cooper scratched his whiskers and looked at his wife.

"She ought to know," said the latter.

"We'll come and have a look at him," said Mr. Cooper.

Mrs. Simpson pondered, and eyed him dubiously.

"Come in and have a bit of supper," she said at last. "There's a nice piece of beef and pickles."

"And Bill—I mean the stranger—sitting on the beer-barrel," said Mr. Cooper, gloomily.

"You can bring your beer with you," said his sister, sharply. "Come along."

Mr. Cooper grinned, and, placing a couple of bottles in his coat pockets, followed the two ladies to the house. Seated at the kitchen table, he grinned again, as a persistent drumming took place on the cellar door. His wife smiled, and a faint, sour attempt in the same direction appeared on the face of Mrs. Simpson.

"Open the door!" bellowed an indignant voice. "Open the door!"

Mrs. Simpson, commanding silence with an uplifted finger, proceeded to carve the beef. A rattle of knives and forks succeeded.

"O—pen—the—door!" said the voice again.

"Not so much noise," commanded Mr. Cooper. "I can't hear myself eat."

"Bob!" said the voice, in relieved accents, "Bob! Come and let me out."

Mr. Cooper, putting a huge hand over his mouth, struggled nobly with his feelings.

"Who are you calling 'Bob'?" he demanded, in an unsteady voice. "You keep yourself to yourself. I've heard all about you. You've got to stay there till my brother-in-law comes home."

"It's me, Bob," said Mr. Simpson—"Bill."

"Yes, I dare say," said Mr. Cooper; "but if you're Bill, why haven't you got Bill's voice?"

"Let me out and look at me," said Mr. Simpson.

There was a faint scream from both ladies, followed by protests.

"Don't you be alarmed," said Mr. Cooper, reassuringly. "I wasn't born yesterday. I don't want to get a crack over the head."

"It's all a mistake, Bob," said the prisoner, appealingly. "I just had a shave and a hair-cut and—and a little hair-dye. If you open the door you'll know me at once."

"How would it be," said Mr. Cooper, turning to his sister, and speaking with unusual distinctness—"how would it be if you opened the door, and just as he put his head out I hit it a crack with the poker?"

"You try it on," said the voice behind the door, hotly. "You know who I am well enough, Bob Cooper. I don't want any more of your nonsense. Milly has put you up to this!"

"If your wife don't know you, how do you think I can?" said Mr. Cooper. "Now, look here; you keep quiet till my brother-in-law comes home. If he don't come home perhaps we shall be more likely to think you're him. If he's not home by to-morrow morning we—— *H'sh! H'sh!* Don't you know there's ladies present?"

"That settles it," said Mrs. Cooper, speaking for the first time. "My brother-in-law would never talk like that."

"I should never forgive him if he did," said her husband, piously.

He poured himself out another glass of beer and resumed his supper with relish. Conversation turned on the weather, and from that to the price of potatoes. Frantic efforts on the part of the prisoner to join in the conversation and give it a more personal turn were disregarded. Finally he began to kick with monotonous persistency on the door.

"Stop it!" shouted Mr. Cooper.

"I won't," said Mr. Simpson.

The noise became unendurable. Mr. Cooper, who had just lit his pipe, laid it on the table and looked round at his companions.

"He'll have the door down soon," he said, rising. "Halloa, there!"

"Halloa!" said the other.

"You say you're Bill Simpson," said Mr. Cooper, holding up a forefinger at Mrs. Simpson, who was about to interrupt. "If you are, tell us something you know that only you could know; something we know, so as to identify you. Things about your past."

A strange noise sounded behind the door.

"Sounds as though he is smacking his lips," said Mrs. Cooper to her sister-in-law, who was eyeing Mr. Cooper restlessly.

"Very good," said Mr. Simpson; "I agree. Who is there?"

"Me and my wife and Mrs. Simpson," said Mr. Cooper.

"He *is* smacking his lips," whispered Mrs. Cooper. "Having a go at the beer, perhaps."

"Let's go back fifteen years," said Mr. Simpson, in meditative tones. "Do you remember that girl with copper-coloured hair that used to live in John Street?"

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"No!" said Mr. Cooper, loudly and suddenly.

"Do you remember coming to me one day—two days after Valentine Day, it was—white as chalk and shaking like a leaf, and——"

"*No!*" roared Mr. Cooper.

"Very well, I must try something else, then," said Mr. Simpson, philosophically. "Carry your mind back ten years, Bob Cooper——"

"Look here!" said Mr. Cooper, turning round with a ghastly smile. "We'd better get off home, Mary. I don't like interfering in other people's concerns. Never did."

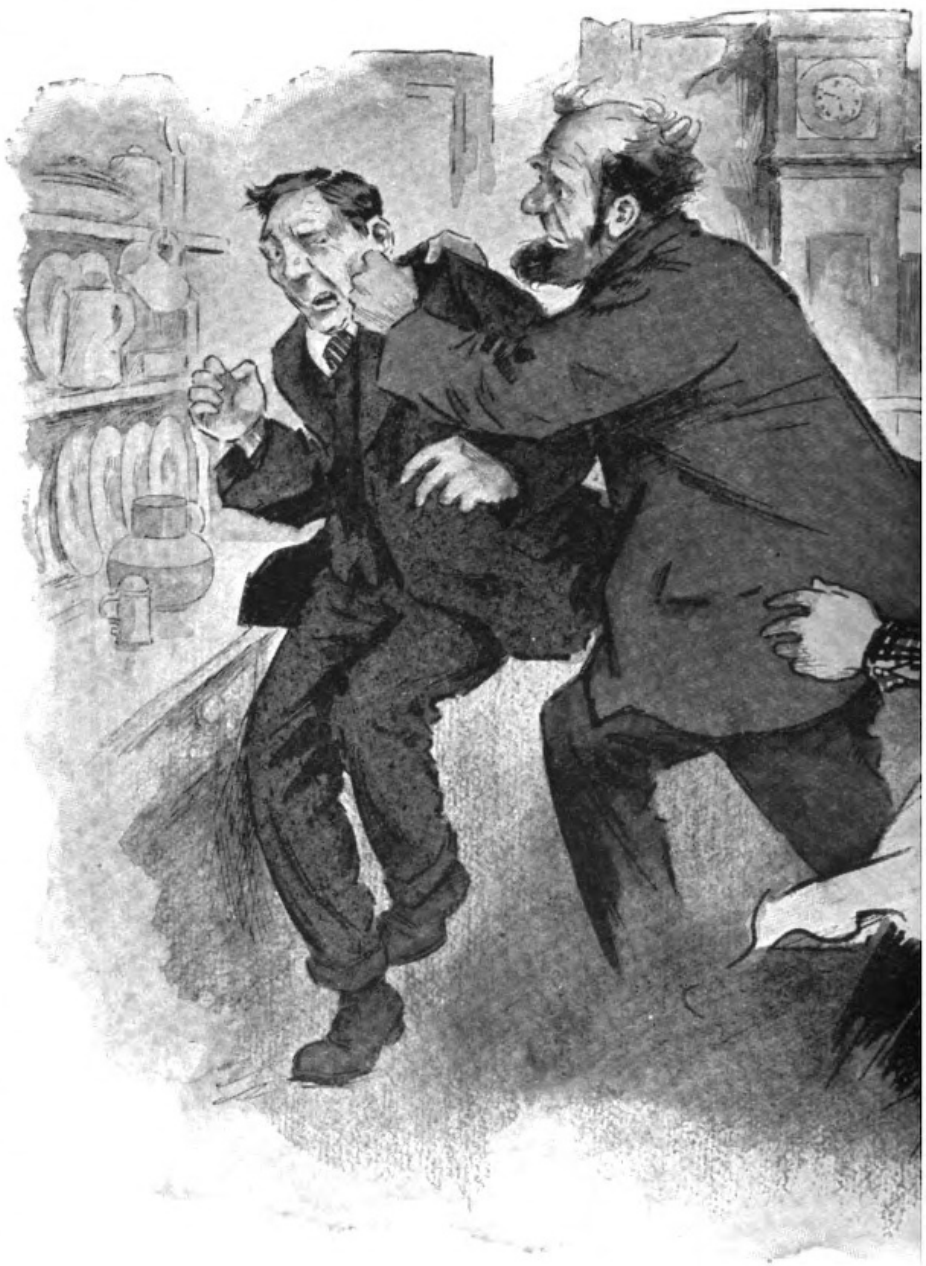
"You stay where you are," said his wife.

"Ten years," repeated the voice behind the door. "There was a new barmaid at the Crown, and one night you——"

"If I listen to any more of this nonsense I shall burst," remarked Mr. Cooper, plaintively.

"Go on," prompted Mrs. Cooper, grimly. "One night——"

"Never mind," said Mr. Simpson. "It doesn't matter. But does he identify me? Because if not I've got a lot more things I can try."



"HE SPRANG FORWARD AND, CATCHING MR. SIMPSON HEAD BANGED

The harassed Mr. Cooper looked around appealingly.

"How do you expect me to recognize you——" he began, and stopped suddenly.

"Go back to your courting days, then," said Mr. Simpson, "when Mrs. Cooper wasn't Mrs. Cooper, but only wanted to be."

Mrs. Cooper shivered; so did Mr. Cooper.

"And you came round to me for advice," pursued Mr. Simpson, in reminiscent accents, "because there was another girl you wasn't sure of, and you didn't want to lose them both. Do you remember sitting with the two photographs — one on each knee — and trying hard to make up your mind?"

"Wonderful imagination," said Mr. Cooper, smiling in a ghastly fashion at his wife. "Hark at him!"

"I am harking," said Mrs. Cooper.

"Am I Bill Simpson or am I not?" demanded Mr. Simpson.

"Bill was always fond of his joke," said Mr. Cooper, with a glance at the company that would have moved an oyster. "He was always fond of making up things. You're like him in that. What do you think, Milly?"

"It's not my husband," said Mrs. Simpson.

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BY THE COLLAR, SHOOK HIM VIOLENTLY UNTIL HIS AGAINST THE DRESSER."

"Tell us something about her," said Mr. Cooper, hastily.

"I daren't," said Mr. Simpson. "Doesn't that prove I'm her husband? But I'll tell you things about your wife, if you like."

"You dare!" said Mrs. Cooper, turning crimson, as she realized what confidences might have passed between husband and wife. "If you say a word of your lies about me, I don't know what I won't do to you."

"Very well, I must go on about Bob, then —till he recognizes me," said Mr. Simpson, patiently. "Carry your mind——"

"Open the door and let him out," shouted Mr. Cooper, turning to his sister. "How can I recognize a man through a deal door?"

Mrs. Simpson, after a little hesitation, handed him the key, and the next moment her husband stepped out and stood blinking in the gas-light.

"Do you recognize me?" he asked, turning to Mr. Cooper.

"I do," said that gentleman, with a ferocious growl.

"I'd know you anywhere," said Mrs. Cooper, with emphasis.

"And you?" said Mr. Simpson, turning to his wife.

"You're not my husband," she said, obstinately.

"Are you sure?" inquired Mr. Cooper.

"Certain."

"Very good, then," said her brother. "If he's not your husband I'm going to knock his head off for telling them lies about me."

He sprang forward and, catching Mr. Simpson by the collar, shook him violently until his head banged against the dresser. The next moment the hands of Mrs. Simpson were in the hair of Mr. Cooper.

"How dare you knock my husband about!" she screamed, as Mr. Cooper let go and caught her fingers. "You've hurt him."

"Concussion, I think," said Mr. Simpson, with great presence of mind.

His wife helped him to a chair and, wetting her handkerchief, tenderly bathed the dyed head. Mr. Cooper, breathing hard, stood by watching until his wife touched him on the arm.

"You come off home," she said, in a hard voice. "You ain't wanted. Are you going to stay here all night?"

"I should like to," said Mr. Cooper, wistfully.

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# Jottings From My Diary.

By

# LILLAH McCARTHY.

A WOMAN'S diary, we are told, is her greatest confidant. She hugs it to her breast with ecstasy, for it shares her most secret thoughts. She pours upon its pages her hopes, fears, and aspirations; her temptations, troubles, and trials; her loves and her hates. For another to peep at its pages is to court enmity.

I must frankly confess, however, that I have no such feelings. Perhaps it is because I have not religiously kept a diary, or maybe I have so little to disclose. There are milestones in my life which have been duly recorded—events, days, and periods which, as I read of them, flood my memory with recollections—mostly pleasant, few regrettable.

Of course, I have had my dreams, but practically no troubles and trials. Most things seem to have gone quite smoothly for me, and I count myself lucky in having my husband to direct and produce our plays, and theatrical godfathers in the persons of the late Mr. Wilson Barrett and the ever-present Mr. George Bernard Shaw. That being so, I feel gratified, rather than jealous, that you should wish to peep at my diary. My only fear is that its pages, while pleasing to my vanity, may provide commonplace reading for others.

May I, however, take you back in the first place to some of my earlier entries recorded in the days when I was a schoolgirl at Cheltenham? For even in those days I had my theatrical aspirations, although none of my people were at all theatrically inclined. Indeed, it was not until the Benson Company came down to Cheltenham that I had an opportunity of gratifying my desire to see a real play.

Even at that time, however, my parents must, I think, have been impressed with my love for play-acting. They had allowed me to study elocution under Hermann Vezin, and when quite a child I loved reciting. My father, with a view to training my memory, was wont to bribe me with monetary gifts to repeat Shakespeare and Milton, and I used to go and listen with delight to the Brandons and Mrs. Albert Barker—my husband's mother—long before I ever dreamt of going on the stage.

In those days, however, my mind, like that of many other girls, I am afraid, was filled with romantic ideals. I wanted to be a tragedy queen to march about in magnificent attire, relating, in heartrending accents, the story of my woes. I used to buy old books about Mrs. Siddons and take them for long, lonely walks into the country, and dream of being great and splendid.

Of course, like Helen Faucit, I used to pore over Shakespeare, and long to be Juliet and Imogen, and, above all, Lady Macbeth, and so on; but I suppose most girls with theatrical inclinations get these fits. I really was passionately fond of Shakespeare, however, and I thought the summit of my ambition was reached when I was allowed to come to London and endeavour to qualify for the stage.

My diary tells me I went cheerfully through the dreary work of voice-production, and how excited I was when I appeared as Lady Macbeth at the Siddons's Memorial Performance at St. George's Hall, and ultimately became connected with the Elizabethan Stage and Shakespearean Reading Societies, and worked with the beloved William Poel.

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And it also tells me that it was the first occasion on which I became of interest to one of my theatrical godfathers, Mr. George Bernard Shaw. At that time he was acting as dramatic critic for the *Saturday Review*, and at the risk of being accused of egotism I should like to quote here what he wrote of my performance on that occasion.



AS MARGARET KNOX IN "FANNY'S FIRST PLAY."

*Photo. by Daily Mirror Studios.*

"I saw," he said, "a girl who did not know how to act or speak blank verse or do anything except how it ought not to be done. Still, she gave a remarkable performance, all the same. I advised her to go into the provinces for ten years and learn how to act. One day there walked into the room where I was at work a lady, quite unknown to me, who said, 'Well, the ten years are up. I have done what you told me. Now, what are you going to do for me?'"

That is the story of how I first came into direct contact with Mr. Bernard Shaw. He certainly did a lot for me, for it was he who gave me my chance in "Man and Superman" and "John Bull's Other Island"—plays which enabled me to add so largely to my reputation.

Perhaps I may be allowed to digress for a moment to remark that with Mr. Shaw neither theatrical good looks nor theatrical good manners are thought of as everything. Nevertheless, to play a Shaw heroine demands every charm, every wile, and every feminine blandishment. Shakespeare's Juliet has only to lean over a balcony in spangled cap for Romeo to liken her to the stars above and the flowers beneath, and to wish he were a glove upon her hand. But poor Ann Whitfield, in "Man and Superman," for instance, has to be just as bewitching as she possibly can and make love to her future husband in the person of John Tanner in ordinary dress, while the man she is determined to marry sits down and discusses the ethical value of her appearance.

Ann Whitfield, perhaps, was my favourite *rôle*, although I glorified in Nan, in "The Tragedy of Nan," by John Masefield, and "The Witch," by Wiers Jenssen. Next to Ann, however, I think I like Margaret Knox, in "Fanny's First Play." It was a delightful part. I remember, when the play was first produced in 1911, Mr. Bernard Shaw refused to disclose his identity as the author. He wrapped himself in mystery, and although we begged him to reveal himself he would not. The consequence was that some extraordinary stories went about concerning the authorship of the play. On one occasion a well-known lady came into my dressing-room after the play in great triumph.

"I have solved the mystery," she said. "It is clear to me that the introduction of the third act and the epilogue were written by Bernard Shaw. The first act obviously is by Granville Barker, and the second act by Cicely Hamilton."

What a mixed collaboration!

I recall, too another little story concerning



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A PORTRAIT TAKEN IN 1900 WHEN SHE JOINED WILSON BARRETT AS HIS LEADING LADY.
*Photo. by London Stereoscopic Company.*

Margaret. When I first played the part I wondered how the audience would receive the attitude of the girl when she breaks away from the conventions of her training, gets into a bus from a prayer meeting, goes to a theatre and a dance, and gets into a police brawl. The question was answered for me by a friend who was sitting in the stalls and overheard a conversation between a mother and two daughters. One of the girls said to her mother at the end of the second act: "But why did she get into the bus and go to the theatre?" "Oh," was the mother's reply, "that is to show you what not to do, my dear."

It has been my one great wish that throughout my professional career I may play the widest variety of *rôles*, and in plays of the most divergent character. Variety is the salt of life. An actress is often tempted to play one type of part, and gradually she falls into the rut of impersonating herself and her peculiarities.

So far as we actresses are concerned, we have a higher mission than to merely look pretty or to make people cry, or to dazzle the young man in the gallery. We are learning that there is more satisfying as well as better work to be done upon the stage than to wear a tin crown and to trail a velvet robe.

I do wish young actors and actresses would realize this necessity for versatility, and lose the idea that the public always want the same thing. Both my husband and myself have, for instance, often noticed that there is one idea which seems curiously to prevail among actors even now. It is that the public want and only want to see them making love. Our belief is,



AS KATE IN "THE MANXMAN."
*Photo. by Talma & Co., Melbourne.*

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however, that the drama can deal with anything—character, politics, citizenship, family life, drainage, if you will. Even in rehearsal of one of Shaw's plays I remember hearing the opinion of one good earnest actor. "I am doubtful about the rest of the play," said he, "but I will make it all right when the love scene comes on."

I am afraid, however, I am departing from the sequence of my diary, and I would like to go back for a moment to the days shortly after my first appearance on the stage, after a brief period with Ben Greet's company, when I enacted such parts as Desdemona, Juliet, Peg Woffington, Paulina, and Beatrice, I played with Wilson Barrett as Berenice in "The Sign of the Cross," at the Lyric Theatre. Occasionally I was Mercia in the same play, and subsequently proceeded to America to take the same part. For a couple of years I played a variety of parts in London, rejoining Wilson Barrett



AS ZEBADA IN "ALFRED THE GREAT."
*Photo. by W. & D. Downey, Ebury Street.*

in 1900 as his leading lady. It was splendid training, for Barrett's knowledge was wide, and his encouragement wonderful.

Barrett was really a remarkable man, and not only myself but many other young actors and actresses owe much to him. He was one of those men who always brought out the best that was in you — sparing in unkindly criticism, unsparing in encouragement. He had great pride in his profession. Indeed, in his opinion, there was no other profession like it, offering as it did unlimited popularity and fame.



THIS PORTRAIT WAS TAKEN IN AUSTRALIA WHILE ON TOUR WITH WILSON BARRETT.
*Photo by Talma & Co., Sydney.*

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He advised all with histrionic aspirations and aptitude to continue trying, even although successes at first were rare. And here, perhaps, I may be allowed to reply generally to the many letters I receive from girls asking my advice as to what opportunities the stage offers to their sex to-day.

In the first place I should advise anyone with youth, talent, and enthusiasm to go on the stage if they wish to do so. I think the stage is one of the best of professions open to women. Mind you, I mean really qualified artistes, not the girl with a pretty face and figure and an inordinate vanity, who desires to exploit all three at the expense of the public.

If I knew a girl who was just leaving school I would certainly advise her to train for the stage if she felt she had any sort of aptitude for it, just as one would advise anyone with a gift for drawing to cultivate that gift. But she should train properly. A girl clerk does not expect to obtain an engagement without the necessary knowledge of shorthand and typewriting, neither would a girl walk into a Court modiste's and expect to be allowed to make a dress because she thought she could sew! They both qualify themselves for their work; and so should the stage aspirant.



MISS LILLAH McCARTHY IN PRIVATE LIFE.
*Photo. by T. & R. Annan & Sons, Glasgow.*



AS JULIE IN "RICHELIEU."
*Photo. by W. & D. Downey.*

Let her join a school or classes, and work steadily for three years at music and rhythm—I regard a knowledge of this as the very first essential—elocution and voice-production, dancing

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and fencing. At the end of that time she will have acquired sufficient knowledge of these branches of her art to be able to put them into practical use.

Let her then travel or get into a good repertoire company, such as at Dublin, Birmingham, Liverpool, or Manchester. Let her travel everywhere, and play all the parts she can. In the ideal training one should play eight parts a week for a little time. At the end of this second period of not less than three years again, during which she will be earning a salary, she should be ready for—yes, and obtain—leading parts even in London, the Mecca of all players.

Yes, this was practically my own experience,



AS ANN IN "MAN AND SUPERMAN."
*Photo. by Bassano.*



AS ANNE PEDERSDOTTER IN "THE WITCH."
*Photo. by Daily Mirror Studios.*

except that my probation was for ten years, instead of the six I give; but, then, I began studying at thirteen.

Parents who are ignorant on the subject of the stage generally think that their daughters must get into mischief if they join the dramatic profession. This is a totally mistaken idea. To start with, if they take their profession seriously they will have very little time at their disposal. That alone is a far greater safeguard than an army of chaperons. But human nature is the same everywhere, and that is a fact which very few people seem to understand.

Girls will have the same young characteristics whether they are on or off the stage; and if they can't behave properly on the stage, they certainly won't do so off it. I think that without prejudice I can say that most actors and actresses who have done good work have the gift of perennial youth. By that I mean that whatever their age may be, their work has cultivated in them the power of being always sensitively

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AS JOCASTA IN "ŒDIPUS REX."
*Photo. by Daily Mirror Studios.*

revived by seeing her own countrymen, and when she recognizes Orestes she gives way to her pathetic yearning for some human love. Finally her swift brain seizes the situation and evolves the whole plan of escape.

There is a good deal of humour in this situation, the way in which Thoas is so completely taken in. I love the comedy in it, for I wish to send people away happy, and not depressed by a miserable ending.

One thing I do commend in these plays, and especially to the women in the audience, and that is the Greek



AS HELENA IN "A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM."
*Photo by Daily Mirror Studios.*

alive to all the beauty and interest that exists in the world.

But again, with woman's usual perverseness, I am wandering from the entries in my diary. They seem to me, however, so uninteresting—merely a record of the plays in which I have appeared. Referring again, however, to versatility for a moment, I notice that in the year 1911, when "Fanny's First Play" was produced, I appeared in Sophocles' "Œdipus Rex," Meredith's "The Sentimentalists," Barrie's "The Twelve Pound Look," Euripides' "Iphigenia in Taurus," and Zangwill's "The War God." This is for me a small record in a year, for these *rôles* are distinctly varied. From Euripides to Shaw seems rather a far cry, but a notable entry in my diary concerns my appearance in March, 1912, as Iphigenia at the Kingsway.

This again is one of my favourite parts, for the reason that it embraces all the emotions. Iphigenia is the most perfect woman ever created on the stage. Starting with the depression of the exiled woman who is cut off from all human ties and natural affections of marriage, children, home, and kith and kin, she finds herself leading an unnatural and repulsive life, which is centred round the sacrifices to the gods. Then the tenderness in her is

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costume. I do wish it was the fashion for people to wear Greek dress. I have often noticed how free and unhampered Indian women are when they walk. It was for the same reason that the Greeks had such beautiful movements, either in walking or dancing—they were not upholstered and restricted as we are by modern clothes.

My enthusiasm for Greek dress once led one of my friends to suggest that I should set the fashion myself, but, of course, I love modern fashions also. I think they are delightful, and there was never such beauty and variety as to-day. Even the hobble skirt, if it is not carried to an extreme point, is so light and hygienic. It is a great improvement on the heavy, full gowns that used to be worn. But I don't approve of corsets, and I think all women would gain considerably in health and beauty if they gave them up. They interfere with one's breathing. The reason why actresses and actors keep so young is that they are compelled to take long breaths when making long speeches.



AS LADY NORMA IN "THE WAR GOD."
*Photo. by Daily Mirror Studios.*



AS IPHIGENIA IN "IPHIGENIA IN TAURUS."
*Photo. by Daily Mirror Studios.*

As regards dress, however, I am by no means a slavish follower of the fashions, whatever they may be. I do not deny that I often like and follow the fashion of the day, when it has a meaning or an idea in it, but I do feel that each individual ought to have so much character in her clothes as in her handwriting. People often think that a well-dressed woman commands more attention than a badly-dressed one, but I rather agree with Dr. Johnson, who said that "Fine clothes are good only as they supply the want of other means of procuring respect."

Clothes, however, should suit occasions, and I am afraid the hobble skirt would not suit me when I am indulging in a twelve or fifteen-mile walk during the week-end, my favourite form of recreation.

I fear I have practically no hobbies, except the study

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of human nature and love of travel, and a fondness for motoring. But I only took to the latter by chance, through an accident which occurred to me. I was down in the country for the week-end. On Monday it was so fine that I settled to go up by the last possible train which would get me to the theatre in time for the evening performance. The pony had already been once to the station, and I suppose settled in her mind that a second journey would be a mistake.

We started in plenty of time, but just outside our house there is a hill. Here the pony firmly and quietly refused to budge. We tried persuasion. We tried the whip, but you might just as well try and influence the weather as our pony, Louisa. Finally I got out of the cart and tried if leading her up the hill would accomplish the deed. Not a bit of it! She lost her temper and finally kicked the cart to pieces.

I then knew that I could not catch the train, and in the same breath I remembered that my understudy would not be in the theatre that night. Imagine my feelings, gazing at a broken cart in a lane in Kent and trying to solve the problem of how I could get up to London in time!

Well, I sent our gardener on a bicycle to the nearest town to get a motor or taxi or something. He found nothing! The only thing to do was to 'phone to London for a motor. At last it arrived, but we had to do the journey in less than an hour (it usually takes an hour and a quarter). What a journey it was! We had at least half-a-dozen hairbreadth escapes, but landed at the theatre one minute after the curtain rang up, and I was on the stage in a minute and a half, but with no make-up. After that, no more ponies for me!

Lately I have been spending some months at the Savoy Theatre renewing my acquaintance with Shakespeare, and I have been very amused over letters I have received from gallery boys and girls. Their point of view is quite delightful, as they entirely look upon the characters in the play as people who are living real lives. For instance, one letter which I got quite recently remonstrated with me for running after Demetrius in the way I did. And it was after seeing "A Midsummer Night's Dream" that a small friend of mine came into my dressing-room and was extremely anxious to know whether I had ever seen fairies in the woods. When I assured her that I had, she then informed me that she had found out that they were made of bits of sunshine that had fallen from the sun on to the earth by mistake. We were, therefore, quite right to have golden fairies. Can you imagine a more delightful explanation?

But I think I have said enough about myself, my thoughts, and the stage. My best moments are spent in the theatre, for I do enjoy the work for its own sake. People have praised my few achievements and referred to me as clever. But I am not that; I am just a woman who wants a few things very badly, and sometimes dreams she has attained them.



*Photo. by* AS LAVINIA IN "ANDROCLES AND THE LION." [*Daily Mirror Studios*

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# A MAN of MEANS

No. V.

THE EPISODE OF

## THE EXILED MONARCH

By

C·H·Bovill and P·G·Wodehouse

*Illustrated by Alfred Leete*

**Roland Bleke was a young clerk in a provincial seed-merchant's office when he acquired a large fortune by most unexpected means. He is now engaged, in the following instalment of this entertaining series, in another adventure in his efforts to spend it.**

THE Caout-Chouc was drawing all London. Slightly more indecent than the Salome dance, a shade less reticent than Ragtime, it had driven the Tango out of existence. Nobody tangoed now. Nor, indeed, did anybody actually caout-chouc, for the national dance of Paranoya contained three hundred and fifteen recognized steps; but everybody tried to. Caout-Chouc teas were all the rage. At the night-clubs fair women and brave men reeled about the floor under the impression that they were caout-choucing. A new revue, "Hullo, Caout-Chouc," had been produced with success. And the pioneer of the dance, the peerless Maraquita, a native Paranoyan, still performed it nightly at the music-hall where she had first broken loose.

The Caout-Chouc fascinated Roland Bleke. Maraquita fascinated him more. Of all the women to whom he had lost his heart at first sight, Maraquita had made the firmest impression upon him. She was what is sometimes called a fine woman. She had large, flashing eyes, the physique of a Rugby International forward, and the agility of a cat on hot bricks. There is a period of about fifty steps somewhere in the middle of the three hundred and fifteen where the patient, abandoning the comparative decorum of the earlier movements, whizzes about till she looks like a salmon-coloured whirlwind. That was the bit that hit Roland. Night after night he sat in his stage-box, goggling at Maraquita and applauding wildly.

That she was aware of his existence, that he should ever have the unspeakable happiness of getting to know her, never occurred to him. But one night an attendant came up to his box.

"Excuse me, sir, but are you Mr. Roland Bleke? The Señorita Maraquita wishes to speak to you."

He held open the door of the box. The possibility of refusal did not appear to occur to him. Behind the scenes at that theatre it was generally recognized that when the Peerless One wanted a thing, she got it—quick.

They were alone.

With no protective footlights between himself and her, Roland came to the conclusion that he had made a mistake. It was not that she was any less beautiful at the very close quarters imposed by the limits of the dressing-room, but her personality at this



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close range had a quality which Roland could only define to himself as formidable.

For perhaps a minute and a half Maraquita fixed her compelling eyes on his without uttering a word. Then she broke a painful silence with this leading question :—

"You love me, *hein?*"

Roland nodded feebly.

"All men love me," said the Peerless One, blowing cigarette smoke. "But I do not mind."

This attitude struck Roland as distinctly magnanimous.

"When men make love to me, I send them away—so."

She waved her hand towards the door, and Roland began to feel almost cheerful again. He was to be dismissed with a caution, after all. The woman had a fine, forgiving nature.

"But not you."

"Not me?"

"No, not you. You are the man I have been waiting for. I read about you in the paper, Señor Bleke. I see your picture in the paper, too! I say to myself, 'What a man!'"

"Those picture-paper photographs always make one look rather weird," mumbled Roland.

"I see you night after night in your box. Poof! I love you."

"Thanks awfully," bleated Roland.

"You would do anything for my sake, *hein?*"

Roland felt that he would like to know just what she meant by "anything," but Maraquita was one of those orators who do not pause for a reply.

"Ah! I knew it!" she cried. "I knew you were that kind of man directly I see you. No," she added, as Roland writhed uneasily in his chair," do not embrace me. Later, yes; but now, no. Not till the Great Day."

What the Great Day might be Roland could not even faintly conjecture. He could only hope that it would also be a remote one.

"And now," said the señorita, throwing a cloak about her shoulders, "you come away with me to my house. My friends are there awaiting us. They will be glad and proud to meet you."

After his first inspection of the house and the friends, Roland came to the conclusion that he preferred Maraquita's room to her company. The former was large and airy. The latter, with one exception, small and hairy. The exception Maraquita addressed as Bombito. He was a conspicuous figure. He was, as the railway-station posters say of Slopton-on-Sea—different. He was one of those out-size, hasty-looking men. One suspected him of carrying lethal weapons.

Maraquita presented Roland to the company. The native speech of Paranoya sounded like shorthand with a blend of Spanish. An expert could evidently squeeze a good deal of it into a minute. Its effect on the company was good. They were manifestly soothed. Even Bombito.

Introductions in detail then took place. This time, for Roland's benefit, Maraquita spoke in English, and he learned that most of those present were marquesses. One or two outsiders were only counts, but marquesses predominated. Before him, so he gathered from Maraquita, stood the very flower o Paranoya's aristocracy, driven from thei native land by the Infamy of '05. Rolan was too polite to inquire what on earth th Infamy of '05 might be, but its mention ha a marked effect on the company.

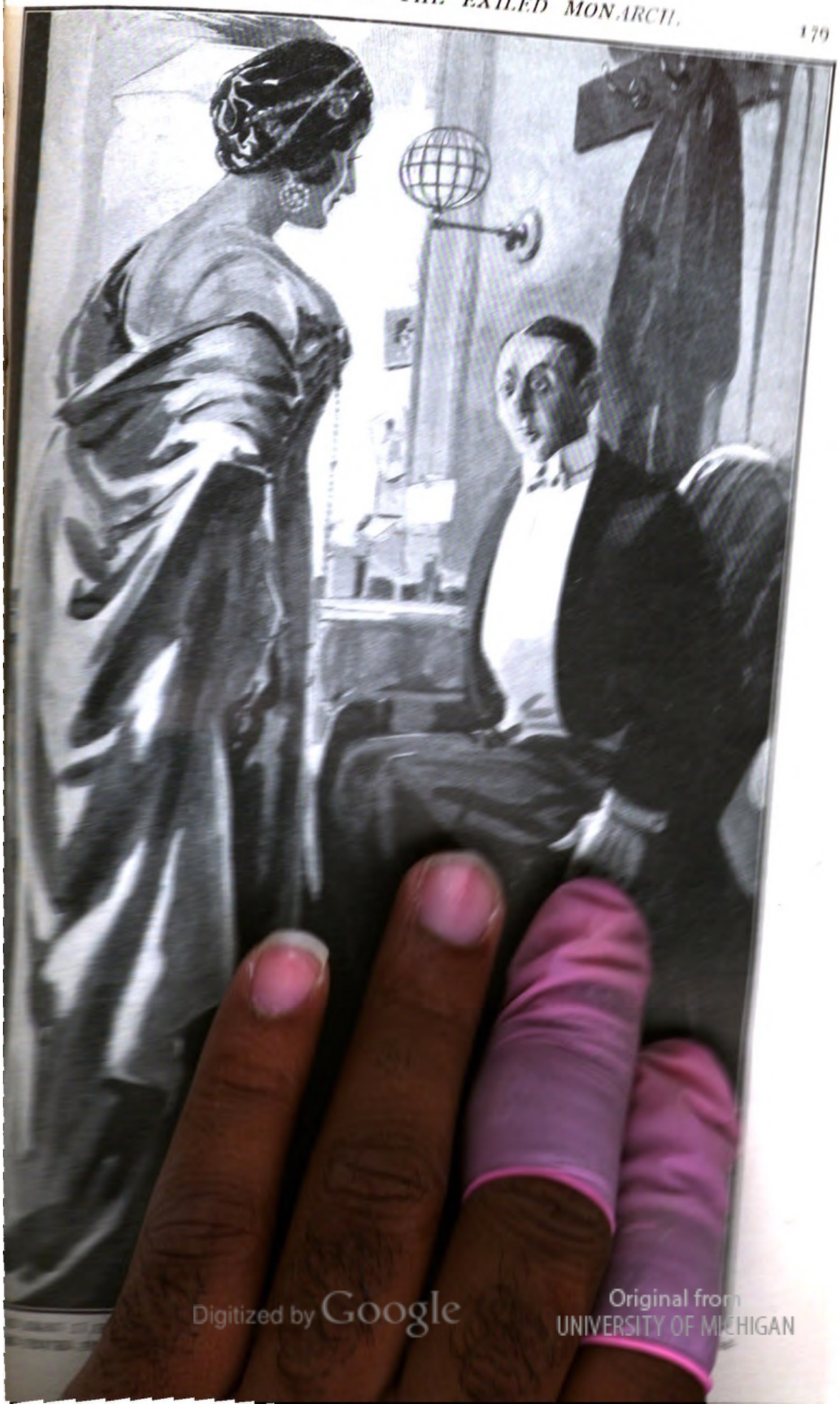
Paranoya had, it appeared, existed fair peacefully for centuries under the rule of t Alejandro dynasty. Then, in the reign Alejandro XIII., disaffection had begun spread, culminating in the Infamy of ' which, Roland had at last discovered, v nothing less than the abolition of the monar and the installation of a republic.

These events had been received by world at large with an equanimity borde on contempt, but not by the old *nobless* Paranoya. Not for them the Republ yoke. Since 1905 the one thing for w they had lived, besides the Caout-Chouc, to see the monarchy restored and beloved Alejandro XIII. back on his th Their efforts towards this end had untiring, and were at last showing sig bearing fruit. Paranoya, Maraquita as Roland, was honeycombed with intrigue. army was disaffected, the people anxio a return to the old order of things. A propitious moment for striking the de blow was never likely to arrive. The qu was purely one of funds.

At the mention of the word " Roland, who had become thorough with the lecture on Paranoyan h up and took notice. He had a feeling that he was about to h for a subscription to the cause ful country's freedom. Especi

He was right. A momer had begun to make a sp Paranoyan, and Roland but he gathered that it

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to himself. As, at the end of it, the entire company rose to their feet and extended their glasses towards him with a mighty shout, he assumed that Maraquita had been proposing his health.

"They say 'To the Liberator of Paranoya,'" kindly translated the Peerless One. "Ah!" Her fine eyes blazed, as a lugubrious chant succeeded the cheering. "Now they sing our beloved anthem, the Royal anthem of Paranoya; it has not been heard on Paranoyan soil since the Infamy of '05."

To Roland it seemed an ample justification for the Infamy of '05.

"You must excuse," said Maraquita, tolerantly, as a bevy of patriots surrounded Roland and kissed him on the cheek. "They are so grateful to the saviour of our country. I myself would kiss you, were it not that I have sworn that no man's lips shall touch mine till the Royal Standard floats once more above the palace of Paranoya. But that will be soon. With you on our side we cannot fail."

What did the woman mean? Roland asked himself wildly. Did she labour under the distressing delusion that he proposed to shed his blood on behalf of a deposed monarch to whom he had never been introduced?

Maraquita's next remarks made the matter clear.

"I have told them," she said, "that you love me, that you are willing to risk everything for my sake. I have promised them that you, the rich Señor Bleke, will supply the funds for the revolution. Once more, comrades: 'To the Saviour of Paranoya!'"

Roland tried his hardest to catch the infection of this patriotic enthusiasm, but somehow he could not do it. Base, sordid, mercenary speculations would intrude themselves. About how much was a good, well-furnished revolution likely to cost? As delicately as he could, he put the question to Maraquita.

She said, "Poof! The cost? La, la!"

Which was all very well, but hardly satisfactory as a business chat.

"We will talk of that later," she went on. "Now we will enjoy ourselves, isn't it?"

And that was all Roland could get out of her.

The next few days passed for Roland in a sort of dream. It was the kind of dream which it is not easy to distinguish from a nightmare. It amazed him that he had ever wanted to know Maraquita. It is not easy to achieve happiness in this world, but Roland felt that a very fair basis for it could be had simply by not knowing Maraquita. How people who did not know Maraquita could go about the world grumbling was more than he could understand. They did not know their luck.

Her reticence at the supper-party on the subject of details connected with the financial side of revolutions entirely disappeared. She now talked nothing but figures, and from the confused mass which she presented to him Roland was able to gather that, in financing the restoration of Royalty in Paranoya, he would indeed be risking everything for her sake.

In the matter of revolutions Maraquita was no niggard. She knew how the thing should be done—well, or not at all. There would be so much for rifles, machine-guns, and what-not; and there would be so much for the expense of smuggling them into the country. Then there would be so much to be laid out in corrupting the Republican army. Roland brightened a little when they came to this item. As the standing army of Paranoya amounted to twenty thousand men, and as it seemed possible to corrupt it thoroughly at a cost of about thirty shillings a head, the obvious course, to Roland's way of thinking, was to concentrate on this side of the question, and thus avoid unnecessary bloodshed.

It appeared, however, that Maraquita did not want to avoid bloodshed—that she rather liked bloodshed, that the leaders of the revolution would be disappointed if there were no bloodshed. Especially Bombito. Unless, she pointed out, there was a certain amount of carnage, looting, and so on, the revolution would not achieve a popular success. True, the beloved Alejandro might be restored, but he would sit upon a throne that was insecure unless the coronation festivities took a bloodthirsty turn. By all means, said Maraquita, corrupt the army, but not at the risk of making the affair tame and unpopular. Paranoya was an emotional country, and liked its revolutions with a bit of zip to them.

It was about ten days after he had definitely cast in his lot with the revolutionary party that Roland was made aware that these things were a little more complex than he had imagined. He had reconciled himself to the financial outlay. It had been difficult, but he had done it. That his person as well as his purse would be placed in peril he had not foreseen.

The fact was borne in upon him at the end of the second week by the arrival of the deputation.

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It blew in from the street just as he was enjoying his after-dinner cigar.

It consisted of three men, one long and suave, the other two short, stout, and silent. They all had the sallow complexion and undue hairiness which he had come by this time to associate with the native of Paranoya.

For a moment he mistook them for a drove of exiled noblemen whom he had not had the pleasure of meeting at the supper-party; and he waited resignedly for them to make night hideous with the Royal anthem. He poised himself on his toes, the more readily to spring aside if they should try to kiss him on the cheek.

"Mr. Bleke?" said the long man.

His companions drifted towards the cigar-box which stood open on the table, and looked at it wistfully.

"Long live the monarchy," said Roland, wearily. He had gathered in the course of his dealings with the exiled ones that this remark generally went well.

On the present occasion it elicited no outburst of cheering. On the contrary, the long man frowned, and his two companions helped themselves to a handful of cigars apiece with a marked moodiness.

"Death to the monarchy," corrected the long man, coldly. "And," he added, with a wealth of meaning in his voice, "to all who meddle in the affairs of our beloved country and seek to do it harm."

"I don't know what you mean," said Roland.

"Yes, Señor Bleke, you do know what I mean. I mean that you will be well advised to abandon the schemes which you are hatching with the malcontents who would do my beloved land an injury."

The conversation was growing awkward. Roland had got so into the habit of taking it for granted that every Paranoyan he met must of necessity be a devotee of the beloved Alejandro that it came as a shock to him to realize that there were those who objected to his restoration to the throne. Till now he had looked on the enemy as something in the abstract. It had not struck him that the people for whose correction he was buying all these rifles and machine-guns were individuals with a lively distaste for having their blood shed.

"Señor Bleke," resumed the speaker, frowning at one of his companions whose hand was hovering above the bottle of liqueur brandy, "you are a man of sense. You know what is safe and what is not safe. Believe me, this scheme of yours is not safe. You have been led away, but there is still time to withdraw. Do so, and all is well. Do not so, and your blood be upon your own head."

"My *blood!*" gasped Roland.

The speaker bowed.

"That is all," he said. "We merely came to give the warning. Ah, Señor Bleke, do not be rash. You think that here, in this great London of yours, you are safe. You look at the policeman upon the corner of the road, and you say to yourself, 'I am safe.' Believe me, not at all so is it, but much the opposite. We have ways by which it is of no account the policeman on the corner of the road. That is all, Señor Bleke. We wish you a good night."

The deputation withdrew.

Maraquita, informed of the incident, snapped her fingers and said "Poof!" It sometimes struck Roland that she would be more real help in a difficult situation if she could get out of the habit of saying "Poof!"

"It is nothing," she said.

"No?" said Roland.

"We easily out-trick them, isn't it? You make a will leaving your money to the Cause, and then where are they, *hein?*"

It was one way of looking at it, but it brought little balm to Roland. He said so. Maraquita scanned his face keenly.

"You are not weakening, Roland?" she said. "You would not betray us now?"

"Well, of course, I don't know about betraying, you know, but still—— What I mean is——"

Maraquita's eyes seemed to shoot forth two flames.

"Take care!" she cried. "With me it is nothing, for I know that your heart is with Paranoya. But if the others once had cause to suspect that your resolve was failing—ah! If Bombito——"

Roland took her point. He had forgotten Bombito for the moment.

"For goodness' sake," he said, hastily, "don't go saying anything to Bombito to give him the idea that I'm trying to back out. Of course you can rely on me, and all that. That's all right."

Maraquita's gaze softened. She raised her glass—they were lunching at the time—and put it to her lips.

"To the Saviour of Paranoya!" she said.

"Beware!" whispered a voice in Roland's ear.

He turned with a start. A waiter was standing behind him, a small, dark, hairy man. He was looking into the middle distance with the abstracted air which waiters cultivate. Roland stared at him, but he did not move.

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"'MY BLOOD!' GASPED ROLAND."

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That evening, returning to his flat, Roland was paralyzed by the sight of the word "Beware!" scrawled across the mirror in his bedroom. It had apparently been done with a diamond. He rang the bell.

"Sir?" said the competent valet. ("Competent valets are in attendance at each of these flats."—Advt.)

"Has anyone been in here since I left?"

"Yes, sir. A foreign-looking gentleman called. He said he knew you, sir. I showed him in, as he said he would wait."

The same night, well on in the small hours, the telephone-bell rang. Roland dragged himself out of bed.

"Halloa?"

"Is that Señor Bleke?"

"Yes. What is it?"

"Beware!"

Things were becoming intolerable. Roland had a certain amount of nerve, but not enough to enable him to bear up against this sinister persecution. Yet what could he do? Suppose he did beware, to the extent of withdrawing his support from the Royalist movement, what then? Bombito! If ever there was a toad under the harrow, he was that toad. And all because a perfectly respectful admiration for the Caout-Chouc had led him to occupy a stage-box several nights in succession at the theatre where the peerless Maraquita tied herself into knots at a salary of two hundred pounds a week. It was hard.

A few days later somebody shot a bullet through the window of his sitting-room. He was out at the time, but the incident had the effect of putting the final touch to his gloom.

There was an air of unusual excitement in Maraquita's manner at their next meeting.

"We have been in communication with Him," she whispered. "He will receive you. He will give an audience to the Saviour of Paranoya."

"Eh? Who will?"

"Our beloved Alejandro. He wishes to see his faithful servant. We are to go to him at once."

"Where?"

"At his own house. He will receive you in person."

Such was the quality of the emotions through which he had been passing of late that Roland felt but a faint interest at the prospect of meeting face to face a genuine—if exiled—monarch.

The cab drew up at a gloomy-looking house in a fashionable square. Roland rang the door-bell. There seemed a certain element of the prosaic in the action. He wondered what he should say to the butler. "Is the King at home?" was banal.

There was, however, no need for words. The door opened, and they were ushered in without parley. A butler and two footmen showed them into a luxuriously-furnished ante-room. Roland entered with two thoughts running in his mind. The first was that the beloved Alejandro had got an uncommonly snug crib; the second that this was exactly like going to see the dentist.

Presently the squad of retainers returned, the butler leading.

"His Majesty will receive Mr. Bleke."

Roland followed him with tottering knees.

His Majesty King Alejandro XIII. on the retired list was a genial-looking man of middle age, comfortably stout about the middle and a little bald as to the forehead. He might have been a prosperous stockbroker. Roland felt more at his ease at the very sight of him.

"Sit down, Mr. Bleke," said His Majesty, as the door closed. "I have been wanting to see you for some time."

Roland had nothing to say. He was regaining his composure, but he had a long way to go yet before he could feel thoroughly at home.

King Alejandro produced a cigarette-case and offered it to Roland, who shook his head speechlessly. The King lit a cigarette, and smoked thoughtfully for a while.

"You know, Mr. Bleke," he said at last, "this must stop. It really must. I mean, your devoted efforts on my behalf."

Roland gaped at him.

"You are a very young man. I had expected to see someone much older. Your youth gives me the impression that you have gone into this affair from a spirit of adventure. I can assure you that you have nothing to gain commercially by interfering with my late kingdom. I hope, before we part, that I can persuade you to abandon your idea of financing this movement to restore me to the throne."

"I don't understand—er—your Majesty."

"I will explain. Please treat what I shall say as strictly confidential. You must know, Mr. Bleke, that these attempts to re-establish me as a reigning monarch in Paranoya are, frankly, the curse of an otherwise very pleasant existence. You look surprised! My dear sir, do you *know* Paranoya? Have you ever been there? Have you the remotest idea what sort of life a King of Paranoya leads? I have tried it, and I can assure you

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that a coal-heaver is happy by comparison. In the first place, the climate of the country is abominable. I always had a cold in the head. Secondly, there is a small but energetic section of the populace whose sole recreation it seems to be to use their monarch as a target for bombs. They are not very good bombs, it is true—the science of chemistry is in its infancy in Paranoya—but one in, say, ten explodes, and even an occasional bomb is unpleasant if you are the target. Finally, I am much too fond of your delightful country to wish to leave it. I was educated in England—I am a Magdalen man—and I have the greatest horror of ever being compelled to leave it. My present life suits me exactly. There is no pomp, no ridiculous ceremony, nothing but quiet enjoyment. Can you wonder that I do not rejoice when well-meaning but officious persons try to drive me from London to a very depressing and unhealthy existence in my native country? That is all I wished to say, Mr. Bleke. For both our sakes, for the sake of my comfort and your purse, abandon this scheme of yours."

Roland walked home thoughtfully. Maraquita had left the Royal residence long before he had finished the whisky-and-soda which the genial monarch had pressed upon him. As he walked, the futility of his situation came home to him more and more. Whatever he did, he was bound to displease somebody; and these Paranoyans were so confoundedly impulsive when they were vexed.

For two days he avoided Maraquita. On the third, with something of the instinct which draws the murderer to the spot where he has buried the body, he called at her house.

She was not present, but otherwise there was a full gathering. There were the marquesses, the counts, and also Bombito.

He looked unhappily round the crowd.

Somebody gave him a glass of champagne. He raised it.

"To the revolution," he said, mechanically.

There was a silence—it seemed to Roland an awkward silence. As if he had said something improper, the marquesses and counts began to drift from the room, till only Bombito was left. Roland regarded him with some apprehension. He was looking larger and more unusual than ever.

But to-night, apparently, Bombito was in genial mood. He came forward and slapped Roland on the shoulder. And then the remarkable fact came to light that Bombito spoke English, or a sort of English.

"My old chap," he said. "I would have a speech with you."

He slapped Roland again on the shoulder.

"The others they say, 'Break it with Señor Bleke gently.' Maraquita say, 'Break it with Señor Bleke gently.' So I break it with you gently."

He dealt Roland a third stupendous punch. Whatever was to be broken gently, it was plain to Roland that it was not himself. And suddenly there came to him a sort of intuition that told him that Bombito was nervous.

"After all you have done for us, Señor Bleke, we shall seem to you ver' ungrateful bounders, but what is it? Yes? No? I shouldn't wonder, perhaps. The whole fact is that there has been political crisis in Paranoya. Upset. Apple-cart. Yes? You follow? No? The Ministry have been—what do you say?—put through it. Expelled. Broken up. No more Ministry. New Ministry wanted. To conciliate Royalist party, that is the cry. So deputation of leading persons, good chaps, prominent merchants and that sort of bounder, call upon us. They offer me to be President. See? No? Yes? That's right. I am ambitious blighter, Señor Bleke. What about it, no? I accept. I am new President of Paranoya. So no need for your kind assistance. Royalist revolution up the spout. No more Royalist revolution."

The wave of relief which swept over Roland ebbed sufficiently after an interval to enable him to think of someone but himself. He was not fond of Maraquita, but he had a tender heart, and this, he felt, would kill the poor girl.

"But Maraquita——?"

"That's all right, splendid old chap. No need to worry about Maraquita, stout old boy. Where the husband goes, so does the wife go. As you say, whither thou goes will I follow, no?"

"But I don't understand. Maraquita is not your wife?"

"Why, certainly, old heart. What else?"

"Have you been married to her all the time?"

"Why, certainly, good dear boy."

The room swam before Roland's eyes. There was no place in his mind for meditations on the perfidy of woman. He groped forward and found Bombito's hand.

"By Jove," he said, thickly, as he wrung it again and again, "I knew you were a good sort the first time I saw you. Have a drink or something. Have a cigar or something. Have something, anyway, and sit down and tell me all about it."

[*Next month: "The Episode of the Hired Past."*]

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# The Old Beefsteak Room and Thereabouts.

## By SIR HENRY LUCY.

### Illustrated by Ralph Cleaver

II.

**John Hare—Beerbohm Tree—Colonel Saunderson—Toole—Sarah Bernhardt—John Hollingshead—Penley—Thomas Hardy—Clark Russell—The Bancrofts.**

A SUPPER given at the Garrick Club by Johnny Hare, to which he bade some score of personal friends, was made memorable by a comedy unrehearsed, played off the stage without accessories, and witnessed by a company of distinguished actors. Gathering in the hall of the Garrick about the time named for supper, the company chatted and the host led the way to the supper-room.

The guests being seated, it was discovered that a chair was filled by one whom nobody knew. In such intimate society the appearance of a stranger was noteworthy. He must be somebody, or Johnny Hare would not have invited him. Whispered inquiry going round the table failed to discover his identity. The most puzzled man of all was the host, who had never in his life set eyes on the stranger, who made himself thoroughly at home, enjoying the wines, the meats, and not least the conversation.



"DURING THE SPEECH HARE'S FACE WAS A SIGHT TO SEE."

Towards the close of the feast wags seated near the Unknown suggested that it would be a nice thing if he, on behalf of the company, would propose a toast to the health of the host. Nothing loath, he rose, and in prosy fashion extolled the great actor. During the speech, loudly cheered by wicked guests, Hare's face was a sight to see. There is nothing he detests more than speech-making. To have the necessity of making a speech forced upon him by an intruder at his supper-table was a little too much. However, entering into the spirit of the joke, he made due acknowledgment, and the company soon after breaking up, the still Unknown went home, pluming himself on having spent a pleasant evening.

I happened to be seated next to Beerbohm Tree (not yet knighted), who told a delightful snake story. Mrs. Tree was the pleased possessor of a live snake, of which she was very fond. It used to attach itself to her in various more or less becoming convolutions. One day the snake disappeared, leaving behind a void in the household where it had long found its home. Diligent persistent search failed to bring to light trace of the wanderer. Months afterwards the Trees were dining in Stratton Street with the Baroness Burdett-Coutts. Colonel Saunderson, the fighting Irish member of the House of Commons, was there. The subject of snakes accidentally broached, he told of a fearsome experience.

Seated one summer morning in his study, the window opening out on to his little garden in Sloane Street, a few doors lower down than the Trees', he heard a slight thud on the floor. Looking down, he beheld



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"LOOKING DOWN, COLONEL SAUNDERSON BEHELD A SNAKE MAKING STRAIGHT FOR HIM."

a snake making straight for him. The Colonel's quick mind seized the situation. This was a new form of outrage committed at the instance of his countrymen of Separatist tendencies, directed against a pillar of the Union. The uses of dynamite having palled upon them, and the pleasure of houghing horses and wrenching off the tails of the landlord's oxen cloying, they had come to flinging venomous snakes within the domestic circles of unsuspecting Loyalists.

Saunderson, though not exactly a man of few words, was one of prompt action, as was shown on that famous night in June, 1893, when, the House of Commons breaking out into ungovernable riot, an anonymous Irish member fell over the railing at the back of his seat and, alighting on the Colonel's knees, was lustily pommelled.

He killed the snake, and preserved its body in a bottle of Irish whisky.

"That's our snake!" cried Beerbohm Tree, in hoarse voice.

And so it was. Getting into the garden, it climbed over a wall, across the next garden, scaled a second wall, and so made its way into Colonel Saunderson's study, there to meet its fate.

The accident which brought Mr. and Mrs. Beerbohm Tree within the circle where Colonel Saunderson told his story and revealed the secret of the disappearance of the snake added the last touch of dramatic interest to what in itself is a pretty story.

On an early day in August, 1906, the response, long delayed, came to Johnny Toole's cry uttered two years earlier in the ear of his old friend Irving.

"Why don't they let me die? I wish they would let me die!"

Meanwhile he had existed rather than lived. His most loving friends were the last to regret that the end was reached. It was a curious coincidence that two men so utterly opposed in temperament and form of genius as Irving and Toole should have held in common the proud distinction of being the most popular men of their long day. Their respective careers, rising to highest pitch of success, created no personal resentment in a generous profession. Neither had an enemy in the world. The death of each was marked by a state of general mourning genuine in degree that does not always pertain to the phrase.

Toole was incurably fond of a practical joke. Lunching one day in the City with a friend, he noticed a number of people going up one of the stairways of the Cannon Street



"NOW, IF YOU CAN BUY THAT IN FOR THREE POUNDS TEN, PICK IT UP FOR ME."

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"AS FOR SARAH, SHE WAS IN THE HIGHEST SPIRITS, 'IN HER WILD-FLOWER MOOD,' AS SOMEONE SAID."

Hotel. Following the stream, he found himself in a room devoted to the service of public meetings. On the sideboard was a musty candelabra. Toole examined it with absorbing interest. Beckoning to a respectable, elderly gentleman, a shareholder attending the meeting, he, leaning confidentially towards him, said, in a hoarse whisper :—

"Now, if you can buy that in for three pounds ten, pick it up for me. Usual commission, of course."

Nodding in a friendly way he withdrew. There dawned on the amazed shareholder's mind the suspicion that either the man was mad or had mistaken the place for an auction-room.

From a bundle of letters in schoolboy handwriting I quote one written whilst Toole was still at work :—

Toole's Theatre,
King William Street, Strand,
June 5th, 1893.

My dear Lucy,—Thanks for your invite. I shall be pleased to lunch with you on the 13th at 1.30.

The reason I am left out of the Birthday Honour List is that it would be the ruin of a Low Comedian to be Knighted. The audience would never laugh again at Sir J. L. T.—Yours sincerely, J. L. Toole.

Enclosed lovely pictures were intended for the Royal Academy.

A knighthood had just been conferred upon Henry Irving. Hence Toole's whimsical discrimination. I forget what the "lovely pictures" were.

I met Sarah Bernhardt at an At Home given by Mrs. Labouchere in the corner house of the Old Palace Yard. Labby left the House of Commons early to assist his wife in doing the honours of the place, and was in much request by the crowd of fair women, finely dressed, who filled the room. As for Sarah, she was in the highest spirits, "in her wild-flower mood," as someone said. No one, to look at her as she stood laughing and chatting with all comers, would imagine she was a grandmother. She had altered considerably since first coming to London, having quite grown out of that extreme slightness of form at one time the source of perpetual jesting among ribald French newspapers. I remember when I dwelt in the Quartier Latin reading in the *Figaro* a grave description of Sarah's controversy with her medical attendant. He had prescribed a pill. She preferred a powder, explaining that if she took a pill its rotundity would, temporarily at least, spoil her figure.

She was dressed like a girl of sixteen, in a gown of soft white China silk with a deep edge of Valenciennes lace. Her hat was large and rather flat in shape, fashioned of pleated pale-green tulle, crowned by a great pale pink rose—emblematic, I suppose, of the sweetness and serenity of her later life. She recited two pieces, or, rather, read one and recited the other. The first was a story of two lovers wandering through a wood taking their last farewell. Over their imaginary grief Sarah mourned in the richest, softest, most musical voice ever heard from woman. Whether it was nature or art I am not sure; certainly when she had finished the story the tears were running down her unpainted cheeks.

It is an old controversy whether famous actors and actresses really feel the emotion

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they simulate in their presentation of varied character. Upon this point Miss Ellen Terry is an interesting and important witness. Talking about the revival of "Charles I.," she told me she never was able to play the part of the Queen with dry eyes. On the first night of the revival of the piece many in the audience were, through one of the scenes, literally sobbing.

"But," said Ellen Terry, "no one in the theatre cried more heartily than I did."

Lady Bancroft's experience in this matter is related on another page.

Few men had a more interesting or varied life than John Hollingshead, cheerfully, strenuously, toiled through. He began his career in connection with literature and journalism. He was one of the few survivors —after the death of his old friend, Edmund Yates, the only survivor—of the staff of young men whom Charles Dickens attached to him when he founded *Household Words*. When Thackeray undertook charge of the *Cornhill Magazine* he recognized Plain John's literary gifts, expounded in the forcible English that earned for him his sobriquet. Hollingshead served under him as he had worked for Charles Dickens. He was on the staff of the *Daily News* before the time of the oldest hands (save Sir John Robinson) attached to that journal at the time of its transmogrification. He discovered, if not his true vocation, one more lucrative than journalism when, throwing down the pen of the dramatic critic, he founded the Gaiety Theatre.

As manager of that little house he did much to revolutionize London theatricals. As he put it, in phrase that grew familiar, "The sacred lamp of burlesque was always kept burning at the Gaiety." Summer or winter, the theatre was ever open and always crowded. Amongst the novelties he introduced were *matinées*, the abolition of fees, and the introduction of the electric light. I well remember passing down the Strand, homeward-bound after a *Punch* dinner, seeing a crowd gaping at a great globe of light pendent from the main entrance of the Gaiety, under which the gaslights shamefacedly blinked.

With the electric light flaming all over London John Hollingshead, in his seventy-second year, took his benefit. It was his pride that it should be his "first and only benefit," albeit he had been connected with the stage for more than thirty years. That he should need pecuniary assistance was a circumstance illustrative of the vicissitudes of the dramatic profession. He made no secret of the pleasing fact that at one time, whilst he was yet manager of the Gaiety Theatre, he had a private capital of over one hundred thousand pounds.

One of his most daring and successful enterprises was the engagement of the entire company of the *Comédie Française* to play at the Gaiety Theatre. He told me he entered into a contract with M. Got to pay in advance one thousand six hundred pounds a week, the company taking no risks. The engagement was for six weeks, and the French visitors received a total of nine thousand six hundred pounds.

The expenses were brought up to three hundred and forty pounds a night. It seemed impossible to fill the theatre and keep it filled through six weeks in sufficient force to cover that sum and leave a moderate margin. The speculation turned out a brilliant and profitable success, the takings during the six weeks exceeding twenty thousand pounds.

That and the rest vanished like snow on the river. Shortly before the end came, with the generosity characteristic of the profession his old friends rallied round him and gave him a rousing benefit. This form of friendship was the more appropriate since Hollingshead was always to the fore, giving time and money, in cases of the need of crippled brothers and sisters on the stage.

The novelist of the twentieth century has discovered a source of revenue unknown to earlier masters. In his lifetime the author of "The Bride of Lammermoor" never drew tribute from adaptation of a story that brought thousands of pounds to the coffers of Henry Irving. Several of Charles Dickens's novels have been dramatized in the last forty years. Eager business man as he was, he never struck oil in that direction. Charles Reade, a contemporary novelist who was also gifted with business capacity, was one of the first of his class who supplemented income from his publishers by toll taken at the theatres.

To-day a successful novelist looks, frequently with splendid realization, to profits to be made on the stage after his (or her) story has run through the circulating libraries. Anstey Guthrie told me that the proceeds of the serial and book publication of "The Man from Blankney's," handsome as they were, were trifles compared with the aggregate of the royalties yielded by the comedy. The presentation in dramatic form of "The

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Bondman" brought its author pecuniary benefit far exceeding the proceeds of the copyright of his novel.

The almost fabulous amount of profit on a successful play was revealed in connection with the production of "Charley's Aunt." When Penley proposed to run the piece all he wanted was money to meet expenses. By chance he met a lady who knew a man with money at his command and disposition to venture it on theatrical enterprise. Penley, having nothing, and therefore ready to promise anything, undertook to pay the lady five per cent. on his profits if she would obtain for him a loan of eight hundred pounds. She, going to work with that appearance of artlessness which is among the charms of woman, induced her friend to plank down the money. Incidentally she secured from the lender a promise also to pay a percentage on profits that might come to him from the transaction. Under these arrangements she seemed pretty well off. So she was. But her share of the earnings of "Charley's Aunt" was a mere trifle compared with the revenue that flowed into the coffers of lender and borrower. From the two principals the lady who had been at the trouble of personally introducing them drew commissions amounting to one thousand seven hundred pounds. The investor of eight hundred pounds received dividends amounting to thirty thousand pounds, whilst Penley pocketed sixty thousand pounds.

Meeting Thomas Hardy in London in the summer of 1895, he confided to me that he had left his beloved Wessex for a time in fulfilment of a novel engagement. Mrs. Patrick Campbell, sighing for some new woman with a past, had conceived a great desire to play the part of the heroine in a dramatized version of "Tess of the D'Urbervilles."

Mr. Hardy, sharing an impression which, at the outset at least, would probably be general, was doubtful of the possibilities of the adaptation. Mrs. Campbell was insistent, and the novelist, the mildest-mannered man that ever wrote so bold a story, consented. At the time of our meeting he was engaged upon dramatizing the novel, and found it an advantage to work in London, where he was within touch of the acutest critics of dramatic work and the most experienced stage-managers. If any point arose on which counsel or advice would be useful, he knew where straightway to get it.

There is little doubt that, with skilful treatment, and with Mrs. Patrick Campbell adequately supported, the play would have drawn immensely. Whether the play was ever finished, and, if so, why the curtain never drew up on it, I do not know. Mr. Hardy is not a 'prentice hand at stage work. Sixteen years earlier he dramatized what remains one of the best of his novels, "Far from the Madding Crowd," which had a successful run at the Globe Theatre.

Another proposed play that never reached the stage was suggested by William Terriss to the novelist, Clark Russell. I happened to be on a visit to the latter at his residence in Bath when Terriss ran down, it being Sunday, to confer with him on the project of a nautical drama. After the interview Russell told me that if he wrote it he would carefully avoid the old-fashioned transpontine style of "Black-Eyed Susan." He thought something useful and attractive was to be done in the way of reproducing in dramatized form scenes from the actual life of the merchant seamen of to-day. Shortly after Terriss, a fascinating personality, was murdered at the stage door, and what would have been an interesting experiment died with him.

Sir Squire and Lady Bancroft, who had the courageous sense to retire from the stage when at the height of their renown and prosperity, are neighbours of ours in Kent. Under date Sunday, December 12th, 1909, I find in my diary the following note of one of many visits paid them:—

"To Folkestone to lunch with the Bancrofts. Tram to Sandgate (in fine weather a beautiful drive), skirting a rainy, desolate sea. Found the Bancrofts charmingly housed. They have had the good fortune to pick up an admirably built house with frontage to road, at the back tree-shaded terraces leading down to sea. It is furnished with perfect taste in respect of decoration and comfort. Lady B. did not appear at luncheon, being confined to her bed with a cold. We were six, including Mrs. Forbes-Robertson, whose husband is in the States coining money with Jerome's 'Passing of the Third Floor Back.' Meanwhile she lives in Folkestone, happy with her children.

"When I say we were six, that was the number seated at the table. As conversation proceeded we discovered that, as in the family circumstances of the little maid Wordsworth knew, we were seven. From the next room came an inquiring whistle, followed by the adjuration 'Halloa, Bogey!' Bogey being the endearing abbreviation of the name of the head of the household. It was the parrot, on

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no account to be left out of current conversation. It contributed to it constantly, if with some irrelevance. After much coaxing Bancroft induced it to say 'God save the King!' Having thus observed the *convenance* of the occasion, it added, *sotto voce*, the deplorable commentary, 'Rats!'

"Talking about plays and the remuneration of authors, Bancroft said that during the full run of their management at the Prince of Wales's, and afterwards at the Haymarket, he and his wife paid the author a fixed fee of five pounds a night. In the full tide of fortune, the start of which they felt was due to Robertson, they proposed a more liberal scale of payment. Not to be outdone in chivalry, Robertson declined to depart from the time-honoured system of the nightly fiver. Bancroft added that it was Boucicault who introduced the system of percentage that to-day makes the successful dramatist rich beyond the dreams of avarice.



"THE PARROT ADDED THE DEPLORABLE COMMENTARY, 'RATS!'"

"The *pièce de résistance* at luncheon was called 'mixed grill.' As the name suggests, it was a composite dish. Someone said it reminded him of the contents of the witches' cauldron in 'Macbeth.'

"'Yes,' said Bancroft, rummaging among the kidneys, sausages, and cutlets for a toothsome bit, 'but the mixture is not quite the same. Here be no

> Toad, that under cold stone
> Days and nights hast thirty-one
> Swelter'd venom sleeping got.
> Fillet of a fenny snake,
> Eye of newt and toe of frog,
> Wool of bat and tongue of dog,
> Adder's fork and blind-worm's sting,
> Lizard's leg and howlet's wing.'

"We were all glad of that.

"As I inspected this dish, of which Bancroft, having compounded it, was pardonably proud, I thought of the opportunity lost to Arthur Cecil owing to too early death. I frequently met him coming on from the theatre to the supper-rooms at evening parties. He had a way which hugely delighted his friends, of going about closely examining the various dishes displayed on the buffet, humming an uncertain tune as he went. If there was nothing to his taste the performance was prolonged. If the variety was rich it was abbreviated. Just as a bee buzzes round a flower preparatory to settling upon its sweetness, so Cecil hummed his way along the buffet. When the tune suddenly stopped we knew he had found something to eat.

"This mixed grill would have made short work of his song.

"After luncheon my wife and I paid an afternoon call on Lady B. We found her in a dainty bedroom with spacious bay-window looking on to the sea. In spite of her cold she was in high spirits. Mention made of Forbes-Robertson in 'The Third Floor Back,' she told how she had been there on the first night of its presentation, and went on to describe the story. Presently, warming to the subject, she really acted the leading part. I asked her how often she had seen the piece.

"'Only once,' she said. 'It was on the first night, when I cried—oh, how I cried! At one of the intervals Bogey went round to see Forbie in his dressing-room. I was rather glad, as I could weep better by myself. It turned out I wasn't alone. Looking up at the dress-circle, I saw a middle-aged man trying to look as if he wasn't crying. That set me off again, and we kept it up together till the curtain rose.'"

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# The Scorch of the Flame

by

## HARRY HARPER

Illustrated by

G.C. Wilmshurst

I.

THERE are men who, while they love a woman placidly and faithfully, can never rise to a height of passion; and such a man was Lionel Maunder. He lived primarily for his work, being a writer of books; and he lived also to extract from life its quietest and most lasting pleasures. He loved his wife, his home, his library, and his cigars; he loved also in the morning to sit at his neatly-arranged desk and work methodically upon a manuscript until noon. He liked comfort himself, but he was anxious that those who were around him should be in a similar comfort; and for his wife, Phyllis, he never wearied in solicitude.

For the rest, he lived in a secluded world of books and their making. His friends, like himself, were writers; and in this quiet, sheltered life, so comfortable, so secure—and so uneventful—his wife, Phyllis, lived and had her being. But to her it was no strange life. In her home, before she had left it to share Maunder's, there had been the same atmosphere of scholarly aloofness. Her father, a student of philosophy and a man of wealth and leisure, had loved the literary life and all who moved in its circle. To his country home had come the writers of promise and the writers who had achieved; and here, too, had come Maunder. In a world of a certain eccentricity, both studied and real, he seemed to Phyllis the most homely man she had met. His gentleness and common-sense, and particularly the air of modesty with which he spoke, had appealed to her intensely; and when he asked her to marry him she agreed to do so, quietly and with hope.

Thenceforth her life was very much the same—the same leisured ease, the same unruffled calm, and the feeling that a big, cruel world, beating somewhere without, could never force the bolts that guarded her. But Phyllis was not idle.

"I'm going to help you, Lionel," she said.

She became his secretary, at his half-amused protest; and a thoroughly good secretary Phyllis proved. She learned to write shorthand and to use a typewriter, and she took carbon copies of Maunder's business letters and filed them with scrupulous care. And Maunder wrote his books with a greater ease and pleasure.

He wrote two novels a year with unfailing regularity; they were good novels, too, novels which sold quite well. But in them, from cover to cover, there was to be found no spark of genius. Carefully written they were, with a soundly-constructed plot of subdued melodrama; and Maunder put each book together in the manner of one who toys delicately with the pieces of a jig-saw puzzle. His characters, though they were well drawn, were like showmen's puppets: each came out at the right moment, did the right thing, and spoke the right word. Maunder worked as he lived—quietly and with leisure; and he never allowed his books to worry him.

## II.

ONE morning Phyllis woke and realized, while she was sipping her tea, that thirty years of her life had sped. It was, indeed, her thirtieth birthday; and she knew that downstairs would be a token from her husband, chosen with exquisite taste, and many letters and parcels from the thoughtful, fastidious circle of their friends.

She looked at herself in the mirror, and there was reflected back to her a quiet, smooth, unlined face, framed by hair of so dark a brown that it seemed almost black; a face that had in it wisdom, and yet the simplicity of a child; a face across which neither trouble nor sorrow had written their tell-tale lines, nor the stress of great emotion.

But it was the expression of this face, appearing to watch her from the glass, that arrested Phyllis's attention; and particularly the expression of the eyes. They seemed to her to be veiled and clouded, somehow to have lost their lustre; and into her mind—hyper-sensitive from her seclusion, and ready on the instant to leap to an impulse or a thought—came some lines of tragedy from a book she had read:—

> And when he looked into her eyes their light was gone; and it could never return, because she was growing old.

Phyllis shivered; it was as though, in her well-warmed, well-protected life, someone had left a window open and in had rushed a chilling blast.

Then, feeling that something strange and rather terrifying had moved suddenly within her, she went down to breakfast and found Lionel smiling and well content.

"I've not forgotten, pet," he said, and there was the dainty jeweller's case upon the table at her side.

Usually, when she came within her husband's atmosphere, being so susceptible to the influence of others, Phyllis experienced an answering glow.

But this morning Phyllis detected a new attitude in her mind. To his quietly-spoken greetings she found herself replying like an automaton; she experienced a strangely dull calm, in which her thoughts moved slowly but inexorably, and her husband's words seemed empty and the man himself futile. Astonished and ashamed at this sudden treachery, Phyllis awoke to battle with herself, but it was in vain. Somehow, by some trick of the mind engendered by the shock that her mirror had given her, she saw Lionel this morning in a new light. He seemed no more the bulwark, but the mere recluse—a man shutting himself foolishly from the world, withdrawing himself and all with him from a contact with actuality; a man who strove to tread on cotton-wool when his pavement, like that of other men, should have been of stone. A strange rebellion seemed to burn in Phyllis's blood, and these searing thoughts made her inwardly afraid.

But Lionel, placidly unaware of the tempest raging near him, was reading extracts from his letters.

"Grant will be coming for the week-end," he said. "That will be all right, won't it?"

"Quite," answered Phyllis, dully.

"And—oh, by the way; Grant says if I don't mind he'll be bringing a man with him. Just listen to what he says:—

> "'Ralph Courlander's in town again—came in from goodness knows what corner of the world; and now he'll either settle down in some country village and become a churchwarden, or else he'll buy an armoury of guns and pistols and sail next month for any spot on the earth's surface where there promises to be blood and combat. Really, my dear Maunder, you should study this man and get him into a book; face, body, limbs, and speech—just as he is; because in our comfortably-ordered little world he is that anachronism—a man who acts sheerly and solely upon the impulse of the moment, whatever that impulse may be, and wherever it may lead.'

"Sounds primitive, but promising," said Lionel, with an easy laugh. "As long as he doesn't fire revolvers in the library, I'm sure I sha'n't mind."

## III.

THEY sat round the library fire on the evening Grant and his friend had arrived. Grant, a pedantic but pleasant little man, had a Government post of unimpeachable security, and ample leisure in which to study the literature of English history, which was his hobby.

On the sofa, stretching his huge length in careless ease, sat "the wild man," as Maunder had nicknamed his new guest playfully, even before his advent.

Ralph Courlander was no mystery, no strange freak or throw-back of his time. He was merely a primitive man, moving in a world of artificiality; and his fellow-men, examining and making a wonder of his impulsive, simple acts, merely illustrated, although they did not realize it, the conventionality to which they were bound. Courlander was wealthy; he avoided deliberately all that savoured of a responsibility or of a tie; and when primitive impulse cried to

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him he listened willingly, and betook himself from the sight of civilized men.

"Yes, off again," he would remark to some clubman with an air of unconcern; and London would not see him for six months, or perhaps a year.

Courlander said what he liked and did what he liked; and if people or things failed to amuse him, he did not in the least mind revealing the fact. Altogether a strange and rather disconcerting man—according to usual standards. And in face and form Ralph Courlander was singularly true to type. His eyes were dark and normally rather sleepy; his face was heavy, strong, and hard cut, with a big mouth and a great square chin, and his upper lip was hidden by a drooping moustache. His voice ordinarily was quiet and even, though vibrating, revealing a self-control which even he found it wise to exercise when in the haunts of gentle men. But, should he rouse himself and say the things he really felt, the man's voice rang with a harsh and dominant note, and his face sprang to life and the whole of his body seemed to glow and to expand.

Towards Grant his attitude came perilously near the contemptuous. At Maunder he looked a little perplexedly, as though not quite placing him in his mind; and yet he was not a boor. He would talk when drawn, and talk well, albeit carelessly, and to one like Maunder, living a well-padded existence, his tales of wild life came as a mental thrill.

Of Phyllis, at first, Courlander took little notice.

"Do you write, too?" he asked her.

"Only letters on the typewriter, and my tradesmen's lists," she answered, smiling.

Courlander responded to the smile perfunctorily. Women either interested him or they did not. For months on end he had no need of their society, or that of any folk save those of the wild; and then perhaps, by the merest chance, some woman's face would set his heart beating—which was simply saying again that Courlander was true to his type.

Phyllis, with her face in repose, did not attract, for then she was merely quiet and gentle. Her beauty lay in her expression, and in the way her eyes would leap to a vivid life and mirror the thought that might come swiftly to her mind.

But after they had dined, she and Courlander found themselves thrust upon each other. Courlander had told Maunder tales until he was tired of doing so; and in the bookish talk that seemed the only medium of exchange between his host and Grant he was frankly uninterested. So he began to speak to Phyllis, and the slightly bored way in which he did so, as though addressing some grown-up child, piqued her.

"D'you ride?" he asked.

"No; Lionel wouldn't hear of it."

"Play golf, of course?"

"Just a little—with Lionel sometimes."

Courlander smothered a yawn. Other men might have concealed their lack of interest, but he could not.

And Phyllis found herself in a curious frame of mind. A burden of disillusionment had, during the day, weighed and pressed upon her; but now, as she sat with Courlander near the fireplace in the hall, and met this big, lazy man's challenge to her woman's wit, a spark seemed to flash alight within her. Phyllis no longer existed; she lived. And her face and her eyes began to live, too. She talked and laughed, and finally she sang; and she revealed a charm that was half-unconscious, and as precious and delicate as some rare perfume.

Courlander was surprised—an unusual experience for him. Also, and what is more important, his curiosity was aroused, and when Courlander was curious, being a primitive man, he was eager to know—to set at rest the itch within his mind. There was in the smile Phyllis flashed at him something he did not understand—even he, a fairly thorough student of women, men, and beasts. In that smile there was boldness, a spice of provocation; and yet, at the same time, it carried the disarming innocence of a child. From curiosity, Courlander passed to active interest, more particularly as he realized that this girl-woman was—with an artlessness which delighted him when he saw it was natural—striving to impress him.

But as his face woke to a sudden zest, and his voice took the low and confidential note which he had found with women to answer well, Courlander experienced another surprise.

"Tell me about yourself," he had said. "How on earth do you pass your time?"

But Phyllis withdrew into a quick and sudden reserve. It was as though something in his face or voice had startled her—had warned her, while she herself was unconscious almost that a warning had been received. And Courlander told himself, with the sudden relish of a hunter, that here was a delicate game to play; here, where he had least expected it, was a problem that might fascinate a man until he could solve it, and keep his wits on edge. And, above all else,

Courlander hated being bored. So at once, like an expert swordsman who meets in the dark some strange and doubtful blade, he leapt to attention and a full concentration of his faculties.

## IV.

THE next day, Sunday, was windy, wet, and boisterous, and Maunder and Grant did not trust themselves out of doors, but sat snugly in the library and continued their talk.

After lunch Courlander, now discreetly upon his quest, said to Phyllis :—

"Won't you wrap up warmly and come for a walk on the Downs?"

To her the project savoured of an adventure, because as a rule, acting upon Maunder's solicitous warning, she remained indoors should the weather be wet or cold. But to-day, throwing the weight of his will into the balance, and laughing good-humouredly at Maunder's protests, Courlander bore Phyllis off upon the tingling, wind-swept Downs, and so entered at once into his kingdom and his sphere.

Striding freely with his head thrown back, and drinking in the wet-tinged rush of air, Courlander was that final triumph of Nature's craft—a well-formed, clear-eyed, healthy man; and as he walked, with his big body alert, supple, and exquisitely balanced, he turned to Phyllis with a laugh.

"D'you know," he said, "this is the weather I really come back to England for —the weather I think about when I'm away."

Phyllis looked up at him from her furs. She had seen no man quite like this before. His mere physical perfection had upon her senses an effect she could not gauge. She looked at him, and looked again; and what with the wind and the exercise, and the protecting proximity of his muscular body—as he opened the gates and shielded her from the gusts which tore through gaps in the hedges—Phyllis felt a tingling and a dancing of the blood within her veins. At first, though, before she yielded to the hour and the mood, she had tried to think—to analyze herself; but soon she ceased to think at all, and just pressed on into the wind by this man's side—every nerve and pulse alive and free, and revelling in their freedom. Her step went light, her heart beat quick; she lived for the moment, and for the moment only.

And Courlander talked—about anything, about everything; and the scheme of his talk was this—to follow the woman in her mood of exhilaration, to profit by the licence of the wind-blown Downs, to break the first barrier of her reserve, and to see what manner of prize might lie within.

And Phyllis talked too—talked herself breathless in the wind; and her eyes danced and her cheeks glowed; she was childish, and womanly, and wise, and she showed glimpses of her soul: and she had no thought or suspicion that she was stepping into a deftly-laid snare; that she was revealing just those motive-springs of thought and fancy that Courlander had framed his speech to probe.

As he walked, and talked, and listened, and carelessly breasted the vicious gusts, Courlander felt a wave of exultation sweep over him. For here, he told himself, was a woman unspoilt and rare; a jewel neglected, among the counterfeits of life. Her emotions promised to be as varied and sweetly vibrant as the strings upon a harp; yet—and this to Courlander was the revelation—they still waited him who might play upon them. And Courlander ached for swift conquest; he longed to imprint roughly his personality upon this sensitive, half-shrinking, half-yielding woman; he longed to mould her to his wishes and desires, to make her see life and passion through his eyes.

But, like the good hunter he was, Courlander still trod warily and softly, and hid the ardour of his desire.

So, in a word, did he play the hunter's game; only this time it was a woman, and not only a woman, but a woman's soul, that was his goal and prey. And he found it a game that engrossed his every thought and sense; and for the reason that the woman came warily as a bird towards his trap, and yet as innocently.

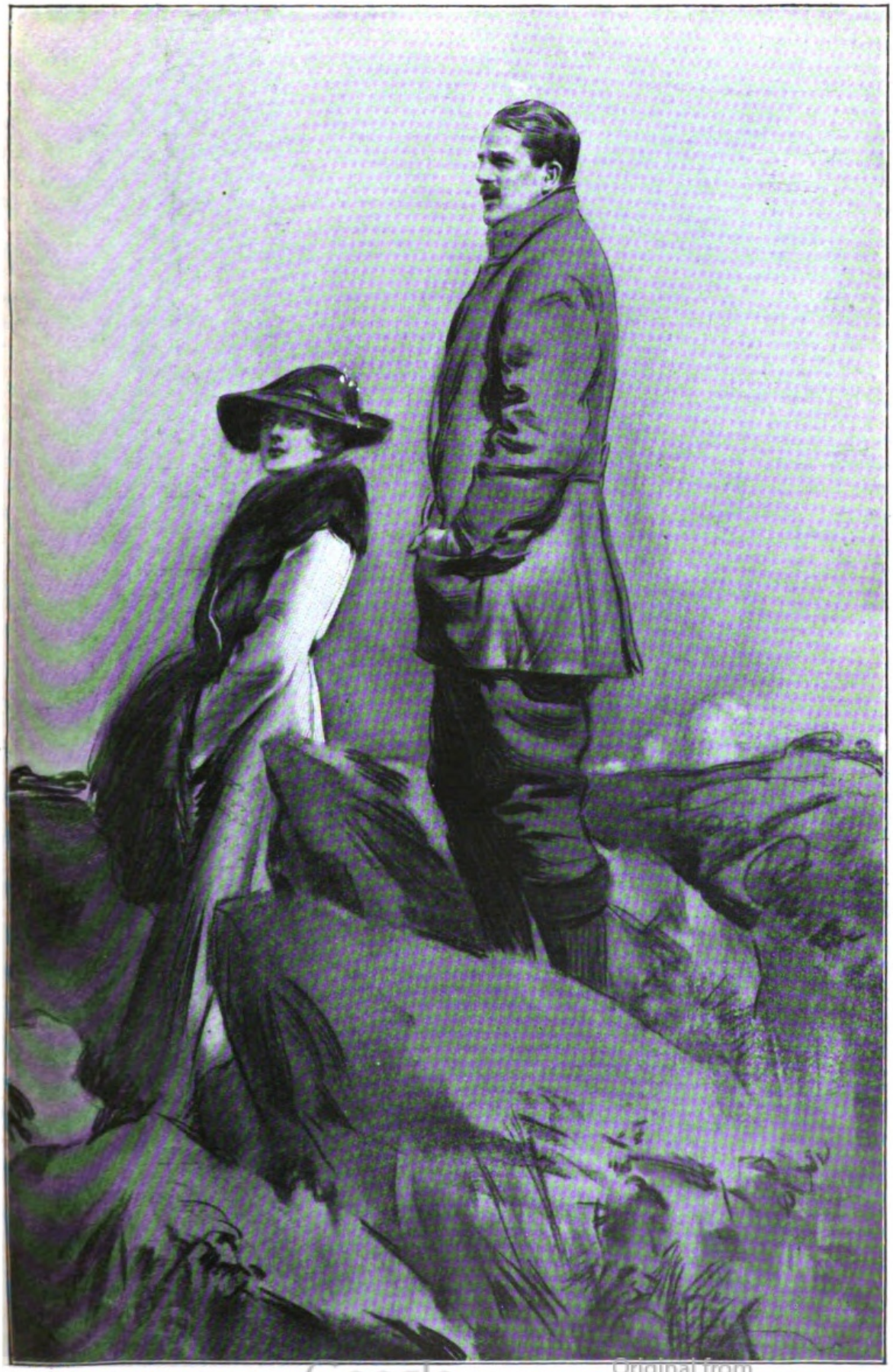
Of ultimate purpose in his desperate wooing, Courlander had none; and in this regard, having no thought beyond the morrow, he was the truly primitive man.

"I want this woman; I mean to have her," so Courlander told himself.

But what became of her or of him, after he had made his conquest, did not concern or vex his mind. And it is for this reason that, when he is born anew into a world of civilization, the primitive man sweeps swiftly to his goal.

For the rest, Courlander's plan was quite hackneyed, but none the less efficacious. It included theatres and motor rides and stolen teas and dinners—all with a careful glamour thrown upon them, and with an unflagging

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"AS HE WALKED, AND TALKED, AND LISTENED, AND CARELESSLY BREASTED THE VICIOUS GUSTS, COURLANDER FELT A WAVE OF EXULTATION SWEEP OVER HIM."

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chivalry to mask the trail of passion; and, all the time, he poisoned gradually the woman's mind towards that which held her upon the path of safety. No new or surprising lover was Courlander; but what he lacked in initiative, he made up for in strength and deftness.

## V.

"To-night, then, dearest, if things can be arranged so well. Eight o'clock sharp at Charing Cross. Then we shall have time for a little dinner, at some restaurant near, before the train goes. Bring with you only just what you will want on the journey. We can run round the shops in Paris before we go on to Tangier."

So on wrote Courlander, finishing with a conventional rhapsody. The obviousness of the whole thing, its vulgarity, were lost upon Phyllis; and for the reason that she was on an abnormal mental plane. The cheap potency of the lure, the crudity of running away from her husband upon the traditional road to Paris, with its hot-house dreams of folly, made no impression upon her mind. Can we ever realize, step by step, how we have reached a crisis? Can a woman go back link by link and see how her emotions have been played upon and sounded, how her scruples have been stilled and overcome—how, by an insidious process of listening to the rosy call, she has temporarily forsaken reason, and is living in a world the values of which are shadowy and unreal?

All that day there reigned in Phyllis's mind a quiet and icy calm. She faced her husband and her home with wide, unfaltering eyes.

"Any letters for me to do, Lionel?"

She sat at her table in the library, and her voice did not quaver. She did not marvel at herself, either, having ceased to marvel at anything. Not once did she consider the enormity of her intended act. Even why she was doing it she could not have explained. She would do it; that was all she knew. From stage to stage she had passed, and passed insensibly; until now she faced composedly that which, but a week or so before, she would have recoiled from with a cry.

Intellect and emotion had fought their duel, and emotion had won. Her brain, through the years, had been well fed and was content; but her emotions had been starved; and it was to her emotions, to the romance that lay stifled in her woman's heart, that Courlander had addressed his appeal. And they, in a sudden tumult, had risen and drowned the warnings of her brain.

Everything was easy—a child's play of intrigue; it is the simplicity of a vast error that appals. Phyllis and her husband had come to their flat in town; and there were artist friends of Maunder's who, preparing a little amateur play, had insisted that Phyllis should join them and take a part. So, when she slipped out with a handbag, leaving a message for Lionel which might lead him to think she had been called to a rehearsal, there was no comment or question in the quiet household.

Her face burned as she sat in the taxi, but her hands were cold and damp. She sat quite still, scarcely moving her head, and breathing faintly. Lights flashed past her, there was a constant noise of traffic in her ears; but it seemed to her that she was a graven figure sitting in a timeless void, and with her world the walls of the cab in which she sat. Of remorse or excitement she felt none; but, with that portion of her brain which still worked normally, she now felt a wish that her destination might never be reached, that she might ride thus for ever in a voiceless calm.

But there came duly the twist into the station yard, the jerk at the kerb—and Courlander. He came forward with quick steps, showing his strong white teeth in a hurried, eager smile.

"Dearest!" he whispered. "At last, dearest!"

His tone was a burning, impatient caress.

Phyllis looked up at him anxiously; she longed for a sweetness and gentleness that might reassure her. But, somehow or other, in a way she could not understand, his proximity sent a sudden chill through her veins. Somehow, there seemed an oddness and strangeness in his manner; he seemed restless, almost brusque.

And as they drove up the Strand to a quiet restaurant he had chosen, Courlander began to make his error. His fault was very human—he was too sure of his victory; discarded too abruptly his disguise. He thought all obstacles had vanished, while, in fact, some still remained. He dropped in a trice the refinements of the chase and gloated crudely in his conquest. Slipping his arms round Phyllis beneath her wraps, he drew her almost roughly to him.

"Mine, darling; mine now!" cried this primitive man, his voice hoarse with passion. "Say you're mine, little Phyllis—all mine."

Even in the corridor of the restaurant, when he observed it momentarily empty, he pressed her to him hotly, over-riding all delicacy and reserve; and as they sat at the table waiting for their meal his foot touched

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"'MINE, DARLING; MINE NOW!' CRIED THIS PRIMITIVE MAN, HIS VOICE HOARSE WITH PASSION. 'SAY YOU'RE MINE, LITTLE PHYLLIS—ALL MINE!'"

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hers constantly, and he devoured her with eyes that glittered.

And Phyllis, under the now unconcealed passion of his voice and glance, was like one who emerges from the influence of an anæsthetic. All day her brain had been numbed, but now—scorched by its proximity to this burning flame—it awoke suddenly and became acutely perceptive. For an instant, as it were, her faculties hung in a critical balance. She realized herself and her position; she realized that she sat in this restaurant with this man, that she was about to commit herself to him, that the dreams and imaginings had reached their culmination. Smitten with an aching sense of her helplessness and inexperience, she yearned for some complete and gentle reassurance, for some sign from the man that he probed her mood, was sure and delicate in his tact, quickly responsive in his sympathy.

And as her woman's sense cried out, her nerves on edge, she looked across at Courlander with troubled, appealing eyes—and, in a blinding flash, seemed to see and to comprehend.

She looked for a face opposite her that should understand her plight, should be alert to tide over the crisis and to smooth the way; and instead she seemed to see a mask, and not a man's face—a hard, dominant, wholly sensual mask; and, in the eyes which watched her with the fixed, attentive light of some creature with its prey, she saw a look such as she had never seen in man's eyes before, but which her woman's instinct, leaping unbidden to her aid, told her was more animal than human; told her was of the earth earthy. She sensed the unthinking, clamouring nakedness of the call; it writhed like a serpent into her tender, romantic Eden; and, with all the delicacy of her mind, she shuddered and recoiled.

"You're pale, dearest."

Courlander leaned across the table towards her and imprisoned one of her hands. Passion had dulled his perceptions; he saw only the woman's body, and could not follow the workings of her mind.

She sat for an instant mute, like a caged bird, every muscle tense, yet not daring to withdraw her hand; and then, as her cheeks flushed suddenly crimson, she answered him mechanically:—

"A little tired, I think—nothing much."

Explanation was impossible, argument purposeless; yet, with an intensity that sent a throbbing to her temples, she longed for escape.

The rest of the meal, short though it was, became an agony to Phyllis. She continued to play her part, but it was pitifully done; and yet Courlander, inflamed by his triumph, suspected nothing. They came out again into the street, where their taxi waited, and drove to the station; and all the time, like that of some poor trapped thing, Phyllis's heart beat with the desire for freedom.

She glanced here and there as they entered the station, but Courlander towered by her side. A wild wish to cry aloud assailed her, to call upon someone to save her from her fate; and then she heard Courlander speak.

"Wait here just a moment, dearest."

Dimly at first, but then acutely, she saw him walk away to the window where luggage was being registered.

In an instant she had steeled her limbs to act. Without a falter, or one backward glance, she turned and sped into the confusion of the station yard; and in another second or so, gasping for breath and trembling violently, she was sitting far back in a taxi and whirling away from the station through Trafalgar Square.

"So you've got back, pet?" said Maunder, a little absently, glancing up from the book he was reading under the library lamp.

"Yes," repeated Phyllis, "I've got back."

Some foreign note in her voice caught Maunder's ear; but the impression faded quickly and he returned placidly to his book.

The fire burned brightly, the lamp-shade softened the light in the room, and Phyllis, her head aching dully and her nerves just waking to their hours of pain, looked upon the same quiet scene of peace and comfort.

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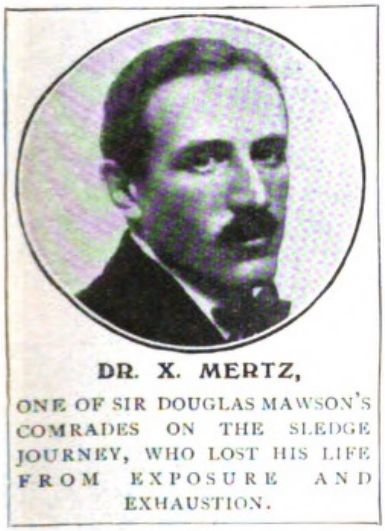
# "OUT OF THE JAWS OF DEATH."

## In the Home of the Blizzard.

### By DOUGLAS MAWSON.

**In this and the following article Sir Douglas Mawson tells for the first time in detail the story of his thrilling experience in the Antarctic regions, in the course of which both his companions lost their lives, and he himself, after perhaps the most terrific perils out of which any adventurer has ever escaped alive, was just able to reach safety. These articles are fully illustrated by some most remarkable photographs and by drawings made under Sir Douglas Mawson's personal supervision.**

*Photographs by J. F. Hurley, except where otherwise mentioned.*



**DR. X. MERTZ,**

ONE OF SIR DOUGLAS MAWSON'S COMRADES ON THE SLEDGE JOURNEY, WHO LOST HIS LIFE FROM EXPOSURE AND EXHAUSTION.



**SIR DOUGLAS MAWSON,**

THE LEADER OF THE EXPEDITION, AND THE SOLE SURVIVOR OF THE TRAGIC SLEDGING JOURNEY.

*Photo. F. A. Swaine.*



**LIEUT. B. E. S. NINNIS, ROYAL FUSILIERS,**

SIR DOUGLAS MAWSON'S OTHER COMRADE. LOST BY FALLING INTO A CREVASSE WITH HIS SLEDGE AND DOGS.

### The Australian Antarctic Expedition.

BEFORE entering upon my story it is necessary to put the reader in possession of certain facts relating to the scope and the results of the recent Australasian Antarctic Expedition of which I was the leader. The complete account is now being written and will appear shortly in book form.

The expedition worked for two years and three months in the icy regions southward of Australia. The sphere of action was new and unusually extensive, with the result that I shall have to tell not only of the discovery of new lands, but of some very remarkable phenomena not falling within the range of other Antarctic expeditions.

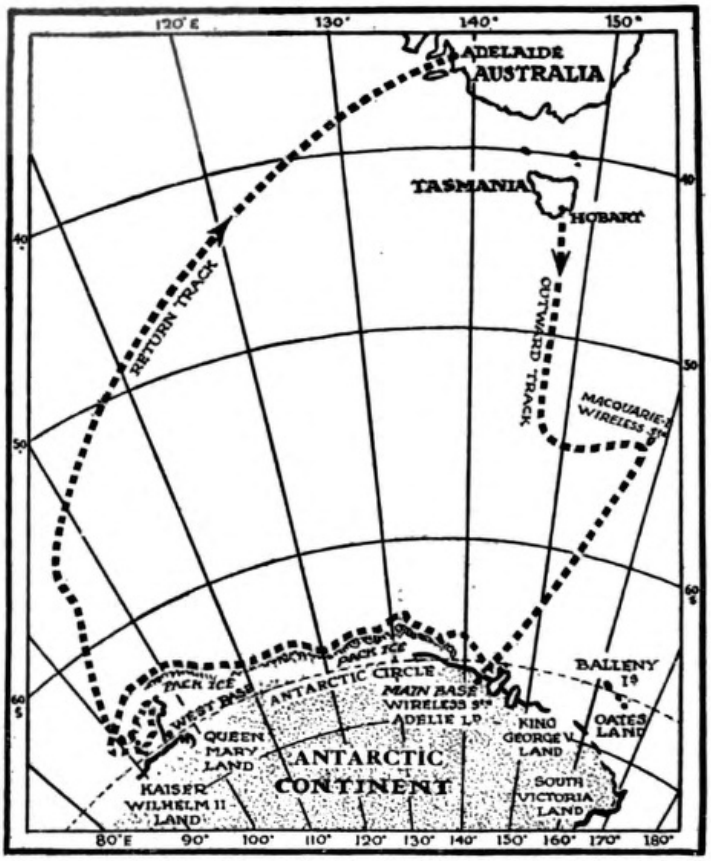
Furthermore, the records of the expedition are unique in the number of illustrations and the range of subjects. J. F. Hurley occupied the position of official photographer on the

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expedition, and the photographs here reproduced, which are for the most part Hurley's taking, are sufficient proof of his merit.

The s.y. *Aurora* left Hobart on December 2nd, 1911, fully equipped for the geographical investigations which were to be conducted through sixty degrees of longitude westward of the sphere of Scott's and Shackleton's late expeditions.




THE SPHERE OF THE MAWSON EXPEDITION—ROUTE OF THE FINAL VOYAGE OF 1913-14.

Captain J. K. Davis, already at that time known as a capable Antarctic navigator, was second in command, and held the post of master of the vessel. The ship's company comprised, all told, twenty-five men; the land parties thirty-one men, the latter chiefly young graduates of the Australasian universities. There were on board several units, each comprising a hut, food, and a complete wintering and sledging equipment. It was our intention to land each of these at widely-separated spots, all to co-operate in a simultaneous effort to explore by sledging journeys the neighbouring regions. There were also fifty Greenland sledge-dogs on board.

### Macquarie Island.

Macquarie Island, some twenty miles in length, situated nine hundred miles south-south-east of Hobart, was the first objective. There the smallest unit—a party of five men—was landed. Amongst their equipment was a complete wireless installation. The engines, masts, and huts comprising the latter were hauled up the precipitous sides of



*Photo.*] **A VIEW ON THE WEST COAST OF MACQUARIE ISLAND.** [*Blake.*

THE BIG SEAS OF THE SOUTHERN OCEAN THUNDER ON THIS WILD SHORE, YEAR IN AND YEAR OUT, WITH SCARCELY ANY INTERMISSION.

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THE METEOROLOGIST (MADIGAN) RETURNS FROM HIS ROUNDS IN THE BLINDING SNOW-DRIFT — HIS FACE IS ENCASED IN AN ICE-MASK, WHICH HAS TO BE CAREFULLY BROKEN AWAY.

a flat-topped hill three hundred feet above the sea, and erected upon the summit. The great labour involved was well repaid, for the station subsequently proved an unqualified success. Daily weather reports were dispatched to Australia, New Zealand, and shipping in the southern seas.

Macquarie Island is one of the most wonderful spots in the whole world for animal life and is a naturalist's paradise. The most striking inhabitants are the sea-elephants, which reach twenty feet in length. In lieu of fresh meat, the tongue particularly was regarded as a delicacy, and with those remaining on the island came to form an important item on the menu.

Unfortunately there is an absence of harbours, and the coasts are rocky and dangerous, so that we were glad to get away once more on our southward-bound voyage.

Pack-ice was met in latitude 64° south, and the ship was driven to the westward, making repeated attempts at breaking through. The icebergs reached extraordinary dimensions, being met with up to forty miles in length.

### Naming and Exploring New Land.

It was a happy day when, on



MADIGAN'S FROST-BITTEN FACE AFTER REMOVAL OF THE ICE-MASK.

January 6th, the pack was negotiated and new land seen ahead. This we included under the name of Adelie Land, as it lay immediately east of that so named, seen by Admiral D'Urville in the year 1840.

A rocky point which we named Cape

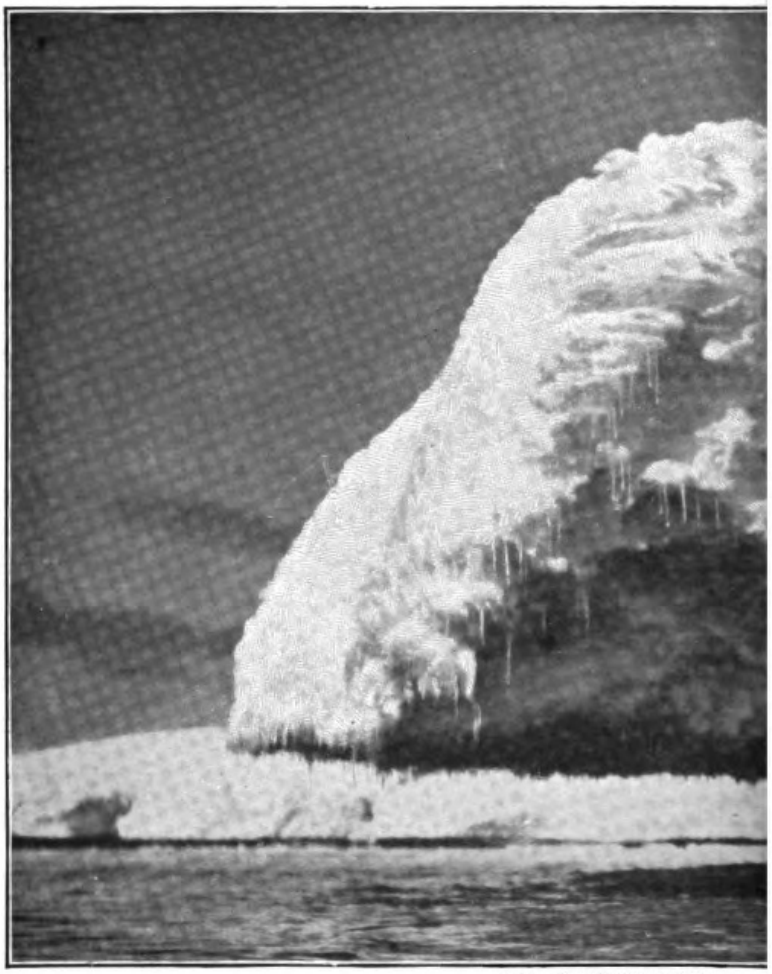


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Denison was selected for a wintering station for the Main Base party. There eighteen of us, including myself, were landed with a hut and stores. Captain Davis then took the ship westward with the object of dropping a smaller western party to winter on new land in that direction. In blizzard and sunshine they pushed their way west, traversing the pack-strewn ocean, always probing as far south as possible in search of land. New land was discovered.

### "Nothing So Daring Had Been Attempted Before."

In longitude 95° east the ship was again off new land, but on account of the solid frozen sea could not approach within seventeen miles of the coast. However, a floating tongue of land-ice extending far out to sea was reached, and upon it the western party were landed with their hut and stores. As a site for a wintering station nothing so daring had been attempted before either in the Arctic or Antarctic. They could never rest without the feeling that they might one day wake



**IN FAIRYLAND—**
THIS PICTURESQUE ICE-CAPPING ORIGINATES



**WINTER QUARTERS IN ADELIE LAND.**
THE MAIN BASE HUT AND WIRELESS MASTS ARE TO BE SEEN NEAR THE CENTRE OF THE PHOTOGRAPH. IN THE DISTANCE ARE THE SLOPES OF THE INLAND ICE-SHEET, UP WHICH ALL SLEDGING PARTIES HAD TO ASCEND.

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AN ICE MUSHROOM.
BY THE ACCUMULATION OF FROZEN SPRAY DASHED UP DURING HURRICANES.

up to find that they had commenced a voyage on nothing more substantial than an iceberg. The air-line distance between the two Antarctic bases was eleven hundred miles. After the work of hoisting all the requirements of the party up the eighty feet of perpendicular ice-cliff — a total weight of thirty-six tons—the ship left without delay on the long voyage back to Hobart.

**Work and Adventures at the Main Base.**

Upon the departure of the vessel we at the main base in Adelie Land hastened with the erection of the living-hut, and a programme of scientific observations was commenced.

Even before the *Aurora* had left sufficient had been experienced to indicate that the average weather of that vicinity is worse than anything before met with in the Antarctic regions. One gale followed another with scarcely any intermission. With the advent of autumn the storms became distinctly worse, and after March 2nd there was no proper break until the 16th of the following November. During that time the wind-force varied between that of a gale and that of the most violent hurricane. Only rarely were there lapses of a few hours' duration when anything approximating to a calm was experienced. Our self-recording instruments showed that the maximum number of miles travelled by the wind in any one hour was one hundred and sixteen, but at times the wind came down in gusts of much greater violence, blowing down strongly-built structures and lifting small stones.

This river of air rushing unceasingly down from the plateau of the great Antarctic continent came loaded with more or less drift-snow, so that it was often impossible to see one's hand in front of one. For days together not a glimpse would be caught of the neighbouring landscape. Through it the daylight came fitfully, and in the winter darkness weird lights* played about on all exposed objects. Such is the weather of Adelie Land —unparalleled by anything else on earth.

Madigan, Webb, Bage, and others whose

* St. Elmo's fire. caused by a discharge of electricity from the atmosphere.

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duties connected with the scientific records took them out of doors, stuck heroically to their task. In the densest drifts, at times with the temperature at —28° Fahrenheit and the wind in the vicinity of one hundred miles per hour, they dived out into the storm-whirl and felt their way to the instruments. The snow, driven with such velocity and warmed by the vaporous exhalations from the body, quickly formed a mask of ice over the face. Firmly attached to the face by involving the beard and eyelashes, this plate of ice served a useful purpose in sheltering the otherwise exposed flesh from the penetrating wind. It had to be frequently broken away to allow of free breathing. This operation, unless carefully executed, was liable to result in scratching of the cornea of the eye by pieces of the ice—a painful matter.

Upon returning to the hut the mask would be removed by plucking it piecemeal from the face; or, as some preferred, by allowing it first to partially thaw, so as to avoid dragging hairs out by the roots. On one occasion, Madigan having removed most of the ice from his face, was seen to be vainly endeavouring to rid himself of a portion of a hard-frozen cheek under the impression that it was a lump of ice!



AN AMAZING ICE-FORMATION, TAKEN IN

Extended sledging was impossible, though repeated attempts were made to investigate the near vicinity. Tents similar to those used by previous Antarctic expeditions were found quite inadequate to cope with the winds. They were, in fact, quickly torn to ribbons. Much stronger tents were then constructed, and eventually all the gear transformed to meet the new circumstances.

### "Aladdin's Cave."

At a spot on the ice-sheet five and a half miles south of the hut, at an elevation of fifteen hundred feet, a cave was excavated in the blue ice to be used as a shelter for

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ADELIE LAND, NEVER BEFORE EXPLORED.

future sledging parties. There a quantity of stores was accumulated, awaiting an improvement in the weather before pushing out further afield. After sledging in the miserable weather outside, the comfort of this cave appeared truly magical, and won for it the name of Aladdin's Cave. Magical indeed was the comfort of this sanctuary after marching in the piercing, drift-laden wind or sleeping in the confined space of a sledging tent. With the entrance properly blocked, scarcely a sound of the turmoil without was to be heard. Shelves were quickly hacked out in the ice-walls when additional space was required. Though there were no windows, an ample supply of light filtered through the ice-roof. Water was always at hand, it being necessary only to break ice from the wall and melt it over the Primus. A narrow crevasse crossing one part of the floor might have been provided purposely to receive the slops and refuse. A small hole leading into another crevasse was the ventilator. On retiring to rest, spare garments taken off previous to entering the sleeping-bag could be hung upon the wall just as conveniently and neatly as in any house, it being necessary merely to press a corner of a garment previously wetted in the mouth against the ice-wall, where in a moment it would remain frozen on firmly.

An incident of special note connected with Aladdin's Cave happened during the summer. Stillwell, Close, and Laseron were camped there during an unusually heavy fall of snow. So buried did they become that the ventilation failed. The Primus burning under a pot of hoosh used up all the oxygen. and they suddenly, without warning, became unconscious. Stillwell and Laseron went down like ninepins, but Close as he fell just managed to stagger to the entrance and push an ice-axe through the snow plugging, letting in fresh air. It was long afterwards before

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any of them came round—and they were fortunate not to have fared worse.

### Adventures and Discoveries by Different Parties: Adding New Land to the Map.

In early September three parties set out over the inland-ice, travelling in as many directions. Each was provided with somewhat differently-constructed gear. The object was to see what could be done in the face of such weather. Two of the parties returned after a few most miserable days with tents badly torn and their equipment otherwise damaged by the wind.

Madigan, Whetter, and Close, who went west, reached a distance of fifty miles from winter quarters, at an elevation of four thousand feet. Their tent held out until within twenty-five miles of home, when it was torn to pieces. Then there was nothing to do but set out for the nearest shelter, without anything to drink or warm to eat. Fortunately Aladdin's Cave was reached safely, after a long and weary march pushing into the wind. The next day they arrived at the hut with ample scars. Close and Madigan were badly frostbitten. Whetter's chief injury was the loss of a piece of skin and flesh under the chin—a scissors wound, inflicted by Madigan on an occasion when attempting to free a helmet firmly frozen on to Whetter's face.



**A REMARKABLE**

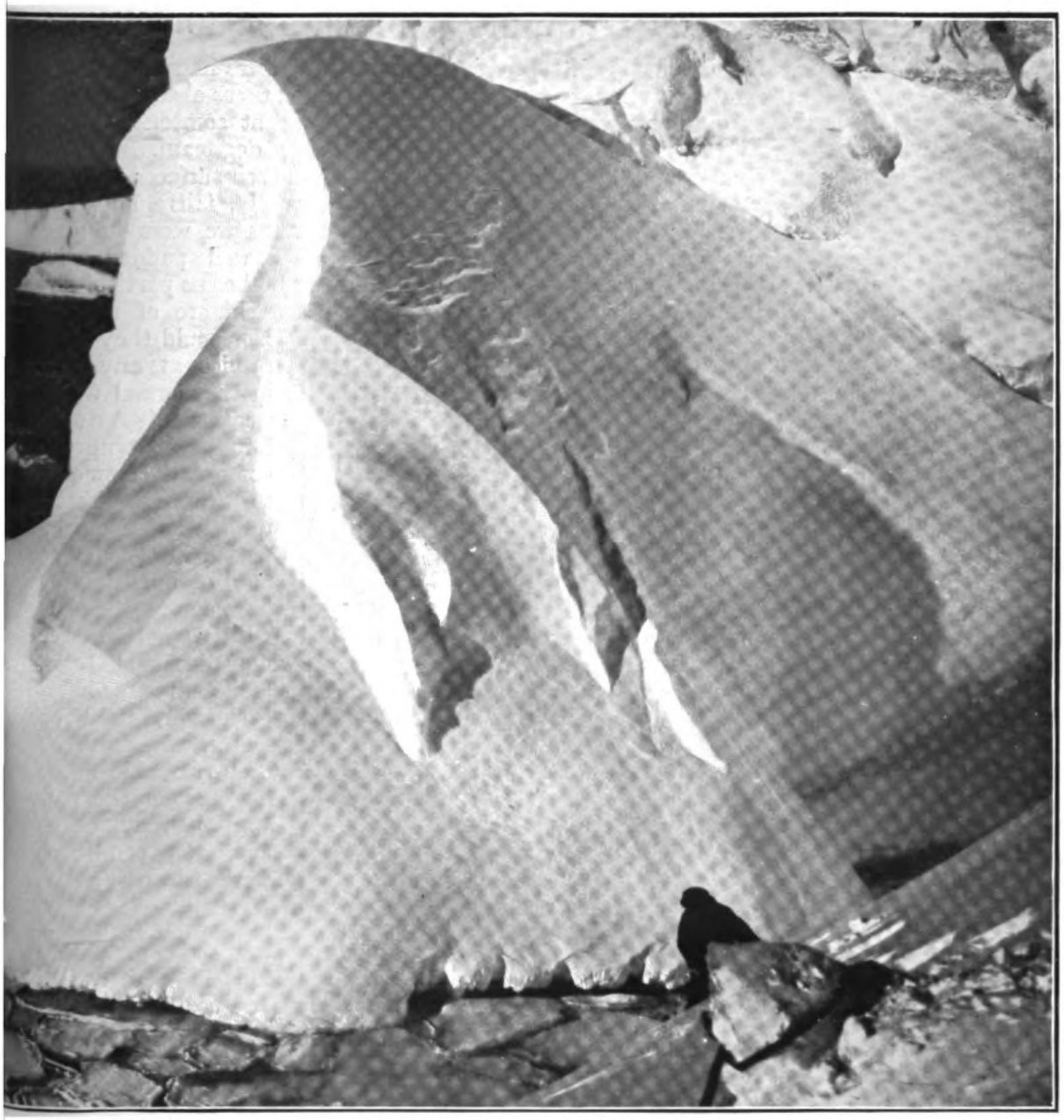
AN ACCUMULATION OF DRIFT-SNOW DUMPED IN THE SEA



**AT "ALADDIN'S CAVE."**

A SHELTER EXCAVATED IN THE BLUE ICE OF THE PLATEAU AT AN ELEVATION OF FIFTEEN HUNDRED FEET—THE CAVE IS ENTERED BY A VERTICAL SHAFT SITUATED NEAR THE CENTRE OF THE PICTURE.

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**FORMATION.**

BENEATH THE ICE-CLIFFS OF ADELIE LAND—THE CONE IS ABOUT ONE HUNDRED FEET IN HEIGHT.

Under the influence of the wind the sea-ice was broken up as quickly as it formed, so that along the Adelie Land coast there was never any possibility of sledging over the sea. This was a great disappointment. The prospect of travelling over the inland-ice was not nearly so promising on account of the total absence in the interior of animal life available for food, the dangers of crevasses, and the stronger winds which we found to prevail on the highlands.

As the summer approached a slight improvement in the weather was noticeable. It is significant of the severity of the climate that the penguins were later in arriving on the shores of Adelie Land than in higher latitudes in the Ross Sea.

Five parties set out early in November, travelling in different directions, each with a special objective. In that way a great area of new land was added to the map. The unusually adverse weather prevailing in Adelie Land increased the difficulties of sledging enormously. Lieutenant B. E. S. Ninnis, of the Royal Fusiliers, and Dr. X. Mertz both lost their lives, and there were many narrow escapes.

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## MY TWO COMPANIONS AND I SET OFF ON OUR TRAGIC JOURNEY.

Lieutenant Ninnis, Dr. Mertz, and myself set out from winter quarters on November 10th. Ninnis was an officer in the Royal Fusiliers. He was twenty-four years of age, and six feet four inches in height. A man of fine spirit and high courage. Mertz was a well-built man of five feet ten inches in height; twenty-nine years of age; a graduate of the Universities of Leipzic and Berne. He was a capable man of sterling qualities. Our object was to cross the highlands to meet and delineate the coast at some distance to the east. We were assisted by seventeen dogs dragging a load of seventeen hundred pounds. At Aladdin's Cave a halt was made for the night and farewell taken of Bage, Webb, and Hurley, who formed the southern party and were pushing on to a second cave excavated in the plateau-ice five miles farther on their way.



SHOD WITH STEEL CRAMPONS, WALKING AGAINST A HURRICANE, LEANING UPON AND SUPPORTED BY THE AIR-STREAM, WHICH IS BLOWING ABOUT EIGHTY MILES AN HOUR.

The following day there was a heavy snowfall and the wind rose. After a few miles' journey, travelling had to be suspended until the drift cleared sufficiently to allow us to see about and locate two other parties who had preceded us and were to await our arrival at a spot on the plateau some nineteen miles from the hut. It was not until the morning of November 16th that we were able to locate them.

On the afternoon of November 17th, final leave was taken of the other parties, and we went on at a rapid pace, steering an easterly course across the plateau at an elevation of two thousand six hundred feet. The dogs were glad of the fine weather, after the miserable time they had spent for some days previously, buried in a snow-drift. The load was certainly not excessive, for it was difficult to prevent them rushing at an unduly rapid pace over the rough, wind-furrowed surface. Crossing these more than usually prominent sastrugi, capsizes happened rather frequently. Each took turns ahead breaking trail. This usually meant someone running ahead of the leading dog-team. As the sastrugi were hard and their surfaces polished by the constant wind, falls happened frequently. However, as we were in good form, and our bodies well padded with clothing, they did not bother us particularly.

Over such a surface ski are of no use. Nor could they be of service at any time in the normal windy weather of Adelie Land, except upon a comparatively smooth surface and directly down wind, a combination rarely met on any of our sledging journeys. We had with us at the time only one pair of ski, and these were almost exclusively used by Mertz, who was an expert ski-runner. Throughout the outward journey, whenever the conditions were favourable, Mertz travelled on ski as forerunner. Except when taking a turn ahead, I looked after the first of the two dog-teams, Ninnis or Mertz, as the case might be, bringing up the rear with the second team. There were thus two teams of dogs, but three sledges: The front team dragging two sledges attached by a short length of Alpine rope, each loaded with a quarter of the weight. The rear team dragged one sledge loaded with half the total weight.

Upon any reasonable surface the dogs did splendid service and gave no trouble. Crossing crevassed ice, however, man-hauling has an advantage. In order to secure extra safety, we tried connecting the main hauling rope of the rear sledge to the tail end of the binder of the two front sledges. This method proved unworkable, and had to be abandoned.

A magnificent view of the coast-line to the east was obtained on the afternoon of Novem-

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ber 17th. A solitary rocky hill projecting from the inland ice-sheet was passed on the left. The course was then altered more to the south towards a sharp, rock-tipped peak just visible to the south-south-east. Aurora Peak, as it was afterwards known, rises out of the deep valley of the Mertz Glacier to a height of nearly two thousand feet. It was obvious that we should have to cross the glacier, and on November 18th the descent was commenced. The grade became very steep, and the sledge bounded down at a dangerous pace, capsizing frequently and causing a deal of trouble.

**"Hidden and Dangerous Crevasses."**

Passing the foot of Mount Aurora, we had not gone far out on to the glacier before the leading dogs of my team broke through into a crevasse; a second afterwards two other dogs running loose by the sledge were nearly lost. From that time on, hidden and dangerous crevasses were all too frequent on the journey. For several succeeding days we worked our way through mazes of crevasses. Ninnis was unlucky from the very start. Perhaps I should say lucky, for on each of the two following days he had very narrow escapes. The first happened at our lunch halt on November 21st. He and I were walking back to the tent from a crevasse near by, which we had been photographing. Approaching the rear of the tent we diverged, he passing round on one side, I on the other. Suddenly a cry warned me that something was amiss, and swinging round could see nothing of my companion but his head and arms projecting from the ice. He was soon dragged into safety, and, looking down into the black depths below, we realized how narrowly he had escaped. It was then found that the tent was pitched partly over the crevasse, and you may be sure we did not dally unduly over the meal.

On the following day a call from Ninnis in the rear apprised us of the fact that his sledge had broken through. Fortunately it had caught just below the lid of the crevasse. He himself only just escaped.

Leaving the Mertz Glacier, we travelled over a portion of the plateau at an elevation of two thousand five hundred feet. On the evening of November 26th a second sharp descent was met a hundred and thirty-five miles from the hut. Below was a broad depression occupied by the Ninnis Glacier. Beyond, at a distance of sixty miles, commenced massive, rocky cliffs one thousand feet in height, standing out boldly against the ice and snow. The coast in this part ran farther south than we had anticipated.

A week of dangerous and difficult travelling was spent in crossing the Ninnis Glacier. Several times the sledges broke through, but fortune always favoured us. It was with very happy hearts that we emerged from that death-trap and set out once again upon the solid ice of the plateau, determined on no account ever in the future to be caught in such shattered ice.

On December 12th a splendid view of the coast-line ahead lay before us, a wonderful land upon which no one had ever before set eyes. By that time the load of foodstuffs was greatly reduced. It was decided, therefore, in future, to continue with two sledges only. The third sledge was abandoned and loads adjusted, so that the rear sledge carried about forty-five pounds more weight than that in front.

Ninnis had been suffering for some days from a gathering in one finger, and the throbbing pain gave him no rest. He had had no sleep for several days preceding December 13th, but that morning I successfully lanced the finger, giving much relief. Proceeding, though every precaution was taken to evade crevassed areas, we found ourselves once more involved in a dangerous stretch in the afternoon. Fortunately there was no mishap, and at midnight camp was pitched on a beautiful surface free from crevasses. The camp was nineteen hundred feet above sea-level, and we had travelled three hundred and five miles from the hut. Ninnis slept well, and felt ever so much better in the morning.

At noon on December 14th a halt was made to obtain a latitude determination. The temperature was then twenty-one degrees Fahrenheit. The day was gloriously fine, the best we had experienced on the whole journey. As Mertz went ahead on ski after lunch he sang student songs to while away the time.

**The Fatal Accident to Ninnis.**

We had not gone far when I jumped on to the sledge to rest and to give opportunity for the working up of the noon observation. The dogs padded on contentedly, scarcely knowing what to make of the happy change in the weather. Mertz had forged ahead about a quarter of a mile. Behind me came Ninnis, plodding along by the side of his sledge, with one hand supported in a sling. Glancing at the ground, I saw beneath my sledge the faint outline of a crevasse. It was but an odd one. We had



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**THE FATAL ACCIDENT TO NINNIS.**

THIS DRAWING WAS DONE UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF SIR DOUGLAS MAWSON, AND ITS ACCURACY IS THEREFORE BEYOND DISPUTE.

passed over scores more dangerous in appearance, so, after calling back a warning word to Ninnis, it was dismissed from my thoughts. Ninnis took the hint, for, looking back over my shoulder, I saw him commencing to swing the leaders so as to take the crevasse fair across instead of diagonally as I had done. When I next looked back it was in reply to the anxious gaze of Dr. Mertz, who had halted in his tracks in an attitude suggesting that something was amiss. Nothing met my eye but a single sledge-track running back into the distance. I was alone! Where was Ninnis and his dogs and sledge?

Leaving my sledge, I hastened back along the track, thinking that possibly a rise in the ground curtailed the view. There was no such good fortune, however, for soon I was horrified to meet a gaping hole in the surface about eleven feet in diameter. The lid of the crevasse had broken in! Two sledge-tracks led up to it on the far side, only one continued beyond. How was it that I had escaped? My sledge had crossed diagonally, with greater probability of breaking the lid. The sledges were of almost equal weight, for since redistributing the loads a considerable weight of food had been consumed from the rear sledge. The only explanation appeared to lie in the fact that Ninnis had walked by the side of his sledge, whereas just before reaching the crevasse I had jumped on to mine. The weight of a man's body bearing on the area of his foot is a formidable load, and no doubt Ninnis thus broke through the arch of the roof.

### Desperate but Vain Attempts at Rescue.

Frantically waving to Mertz to bring up my sledge, upon which was some Alpine rope, I leant over and shouted into the dark depths below. No sound came back except the moaning of a dog caught on a shelf just visible a hundred and fifty feet down. The poor animal had a broken back, and was attempting to sit up with the front part of its body, whilst the hinder portion lay limp. Another dog was by its side, apparently quite dead. Caught near by was what appeared in the gloom to be the remains of the tent; also a canvas tank containing food for three men for a fortnight.

We took turns about leaning over the edge on a rope, calling into the darkness, in the hope that our companion might be still alive. For three hours we called unceasingly, but no answering sound came back. The dog had ceased to moan and lay stiff. A chill draught flowed out of the hole. There appeared no hope for our comrade.

By means of a fishing-line it was ascertained that the first sheer fall was a hundred and fifty feet. Then came a slight bend in the foot wall just at the ledge upon which the remains were to be seen. On either side of the ledge the crevasse went on down into darkness.

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Piecing together all the rope remaining, it was found insufficient to reach the ledge, and any idea of going below to investigate and secure some of the food had to be abandoned. Stock was then taken of what remained. There was a bare one and a half weeks' food for ourselves, and nothing at all for the dogs! To make things worse, the tent, spade, ice-axe, and many other things were lost as well. Fortunately there was saved a spare tent-cover. Mertz lost his Burberry trousers and helmet. He had, however, another helmet well covered with Burberry, but the trousers were not so satisfactorily replaced. A pair of thick Jaeger under-trousers was forthcoming from amongst the spare clothing, and henceforth he donned those whenever extra warmth was required.

Late in the afternoon we went on to a higher point ahead to get a better view of the vicinity, and there at three hundred and eleven miles from the hut a complete observation for position was made. Back at the crevasse we voted ourselves a thin soup almost all water. The dogs were given old fur mitts and several spare raw-hide straps, which they ravenously demolished. We still continued to call down into the crevasse at regular intervals, in case Ninnis might not have been killed outright, and become conscious in the meantime. There was no reply.

Before commencing the return journey I read the Burial Service, both of us standing by the crevasse. I can well recall, when the ceremony was over, Mertz's happier face and his short "Thank you!" as he shook my hand.

**Beginning the Fatal Journey Home.**

The homeward journey was commenced at 9 p.m.

The outward tracks were followed back as far as the camp of the evening of December 12th, where the remains of a sledge and a broken spade had been abandoned. In our plight the recovery of those articles was most important. Fortunately the weather held good. Had snow fallen there would have been no hope of recovering anything lying in that unbroken expanse. It was a reckless, wild dash of fourteen miles, for the most part over a dangerously crevassed surface.

The old camp was reached safely in the early morning of December 15th. Mertz cut a runner of the broken sledge in halves, and used the two pieces in conjunction with his ski as a frame on which to pitch the spare tent-cover. Each time before this shelter could be erected there was a deal of lashing to do. It was altogether a most unhandy arrangement, compared with the bamboo poles that were lost.

Deliberating as to the best route to adopt for the return journey, it was decided that a descent to the frozen sea would be dangerous on account of the heavily-crevassed nature of the coastal slopes, and would undoubtedly cause delay, for it would make the distance to the hut longer. To decide upon the sea-ice route would also be to take other risks as well, for from the altitude at which we stood, though we could see that the sea was covered with floe-ice, the nature of it as a travelling surface was entirely unknown. In any case, it was extremely likely to be breaking up, for it was high summer. On the other hand, on sea-ice there was a chance of obtaining seals for food.

After due consideration, it seemed to us that, as the out-journey had acquainted us with the nature of the country, a return journey over the plateau, avoiding the well-known crevassed zones, could be made in quick time, and by eating some of the dogs the food supply would last out. The plateau route was adopted. George, the poorest of the dogs, was killed, and partly fed to the others, partly kept for ourselves. The meat was roughly fried on the aluminium lid of the cooker, an operation which resulted in little more than scorching the surface. Though it had a strong, musty taste, in the circumstances it was voted good. As the mugs and spoons were lost, pannikins were improvised out of two tins in which cartridges and matches had been packed. Mertz carved wooden spoons out of a portion of the broken sledge.

In the fine weather which favoured us at the time the sun made the surface sticky during the day. In the evening, with the sun low down, the surface became crisp and the sledges dragged more easily, so we decided to travel at night.

Camp was broken at 6 p.m., and the long and painful journey commenced. Long and painful we were indeed prepared to find it, but little at that moment did I foresee the anguish of the days before us, during which I was to lose my other friend and comrade, and from which I was only to escape with my own life as by a miracle.

*(To be concluded.)*

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# "A LESSON TO LIONEL CUTTS"



By

## E. PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM.

Illustrated by Tom Peddie.

AT twenty minutes past eight on a dark, pleasantly warm autumnal evening Mr. Lionel Cutts sallied out into the streets of Norwich in search of adventures. His mind was pleasantly free from all sense of responsibility. He had glanced in at the boots' office to be sure that his sample-cases were in order and a porter and barrow duly commanded for the following morning. He had written a full account to his employers of his doings in a neighbouring town, had enclosed a very creditable sheet of orders, and the usual grumble as to the immoral competition indulged in by a rival firm—which competition, he managed to hint delicately, might have resulted in a serious loss of business but for his own personal popularity with his customers. He was fortified by the recent consumption of his favourite meal—a hearty meat tea—a repast of which he was secretly ashamed but to which he still clung; and he was conscious more than ever of that curious and most unaccountable thrill which nearly always stirred his pulses when he sallied out after his day's work into the gas-lit streets of some little-known town. For Lionel Cutts, although an excellent commercial traveller and a young man of regular habits and blameless life, was an exceedingly romantic person.

The direction which his wanderings took was in itself a proof of his eccentricity. He deliberately avoided the crowded main street. The cinema palaces, so far as he was concerned, displayed in vain their flamboyant signs. The huge advertisements of a world-famed circus left him unmoved. He wandered instead around the Cathedral Close, gazed up at the

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gloomy, ivy-covered houses, listened to the rustling of the wind in the elm trees, pursued for some distance the path which skirted the turgid river. He could never explain, even to himself, the satisfaction which he undoubtedly derived from such peregrinations. He only knew that he lost count of himself, felt imbued with a vague sense of superiority, was dimly conscious of the existence of many things in life which had nothing whatever to do with the admirable career of "Our Mr. Lionel Cutts," of the great firm of Merryweather, Jones, and Co. And all the time there was the unexpressed, perhaps unrealized, hope of an adventure—a hope utterly vague, but sufficiently inspiring to lead him often to the silent places when the crowded streets, the hum of many voices, and the popular music called loudly to his kind. A light in the window of a silent house, the trim figure of a little maidservant suitably disguised, even the strains of a violin from the suddenly-opened door of some remote public-house, had all possessed their allurements for him. He had had many disappointments, some laughable, some almost humiliating, all commonplace. To-night was to be different!

It started, of course, with a girl. She passed him at the end of an empty street leading out from the Close, a slim-figured, graceful girl, with pale, impressive face and large dark eyes, which swept him over modestly yet not without some interest, as she paused at the edge of the kerbstone. It was a lonely spot—there was scarcely another soul in sight—and, notwithstanding her undoubtedly refined appearance, her eyes had not been immediately withdrawn from his eager gaze.

Lionel Cutts took his courage in both hands. He removed the cigarette from his mouth and lifted his tweed cap. These things were done in the best possible air.

"Can I be of any assistance, miss?" he inquired.

She looked at him, not angrily but with some surprise.

"Assistance?" she repeated, and from the first sound of her voice Lionel Cutts felt that his adventure had arrived.

"Thought you'd lost your way or something of that sort," he continued.

She actually smiled at him—a curious, apologetic little smile in which her eyes seemed to take part.

"To tell you the truth," she confessed, moving a little nearer to him, "I have."

"May I try and put you right?" he begged. "I'm a stranger here myself, just strolling about for a bit, but I know a few of the streets."

"You don't live in the city, then?"

He shook his head. By this time, owing to his skilful manœuvres, they were walking side by side.

"Just passing through," he explained, airily. "I am taking a little motor tour through the eastern counties—looking for a shoot for next year, if I can find one."

"How lovely!" she murmured, glancing up at him shyly.

"What about yourself?" he inquired.

"Oh, I'm staying down there for a night or two with my father," she replied, motioning back with her head towards the Close. "My father is a clergyman on the other side of the county, and we are staying—with the Dean."

Lionel Cutts didn't know exactly what a dean was, but he felt that it was something exceedingly superior. There was no doubt now about the adventure. His tone, however, became a little more humble.

"Would you honour me by taking a little walk?" he asked.

She seemed dubious. The shadow of her ecclesiastical relatives seemed to lean down over her.

"I don't think I dare," she murmured. "You see, I don't know you. Which way?"

"First turn to the left, round here," he replied, promptly. "It leads right out into the country. Let's pretend we're old friends, been introduced by the Bishop, and all that sort of thing. My name's Montressor—Lionel Montressor."

She sighed. "I can see that you are used to having your own way," she observed, resignedly. "Mine is Hardcastle—Nancy Hardcastle. I came out for a few minutes because all the rooms were so hot. Now you must tell me of your motor tour and about your shooting. How lovely to have a shoot of your own!"

He smiled in a superior sort of way.

"I'd rather hear about your father's parish," he replied.

They had a very pleasant walk and they exchanged many confidences of an interesting and personal nature. When they parted at the corner of the Close the young lady became almost solemn.

"Mr. Montressor," she pleaded, earnestly, "I want you to promise me, upon your word of honour, that you will forget this evening—that, if we should ever meet again in society, you will treat me as a stranger. I have never in my life done such a dreadful thing as this,

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but I won't regret it—if you will give me that promise."

He gave it, much impressed, and although she seemed at first terribly distressed by the condition which he imposed, she eventually paid—well away from the gas-lamp. Lionel Cutts walked back to his hotel with his feet upon the air. He enjoyed his whisky and soda and watched the finish of a game of pool in the billiard-room in high good humour. He had spent a thoroughly satisfactory evening.



"DON'T LET THEM SEE YOU TALKING TO ME. IT WON'T DO YOU ANY GOOD."

Their next meeting was not in society. It took place at about five minutes past nine on the following morning, when Lionel Cutts was personally assisting in the unloading of his sample-cases and their disposal inside the premises of Messrs. Hyde Brothers, drapers and haberdashers. Miss Hardcastle was standing behind the counter upon which he had just deposited, with some effort, his heaviest case. He looked at her, breathless, his mouth a little open, his healthy colour deepening, the perspiration, not wholly born of his exertions, standing out upon his forehead. As usual in such a situation, the woman triumphed. She smiled at him very sweetly.

"Out early, aren't you, Mr. Montressor?" she remarked. "Are you motoring far to-day?"

"How's the dean?" he managed to stammer.

She leaned across the counter.

"Don't let's be sillies any longer," she said, earnestly. "If you want to see Mr. Orton, the new buyer, he's just over there, through that door; and Mr. Greatrex, of Brown and Horris, is in the next department, waiting to get hold of him, with four truckloads of samples. If you slip through that door you'll just get in first."

Mr. Cutts, notwithstanding his romantic disposition, was all for business. He was off like a shot, and he beat the enterprising representative of Messrs. Brown and Horris by a short head. An hour later, on his way out after a most successful interview, he approached with some temerity the counter behind which Miss Hardcastle was standing.

"Will you please——" he began.

"Same time and place to-night," she interrupted, glancing over her shoulder; "and my name is Nancy Grey. Don't let them see you talking to me. It won't do you any good."

Lionel Cutts lifted his hat and left the place, somewhat cheered. He kept his appointment that night with a certain amount of trepidation, but he found Miss Grey a most delightful young woman.

"Idiotic, wasn't it?" she laughed, as they shook hands. "But I can't help it. Being in business all day, a girl does sort of get fed up with commonplace things, and I'm confessing right away that I like to make-believe. I was making-believe all last evening. It came just as natural as anything."

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"Same here," he acknowledged, heartily. "I can't keep off it. I don't care for the ordinary sort of amusements at all after my work's done. I like to wander off and make-believe, too."

"Now, isn't that queer!" she exclaimed, stopping short upon the pavement for a moment. "I never met anyone else like it before. It's exactly what I do myself. I can't keep from it," she asserted, impressively. "Last night I was pretending that I had been dining at the Palace and my car had broken down. I was looking for assistance when I met you, but I had to change things just a little because I suddenly remembered that I wasn't in evening dress."

"Seems to me we ought to hit it off together," he declared, confidently. "What shall it be to-night—a cinema or the theatre?"

She shook her head disparagingly.

"That's just what ordinary people would do," she objected.

"Anything you like to suggest," he remarked, gallantly.

She reflected for a moment. Then her face lit up.

"I know what!" she decided, suddenly. "I'll take you where I went to this morning before breakfast. I saw something which has made me imagine things all day. I've made up nearly a dozen stories about it. You shall come, too, and have a try. We'll have to go by tram. Do you mind?"

"Not I!" he answered. "I don't care how far it is—the farther the better."

They travelled out of the city on the top of an electric car, and during the whole of the journey she never mentioned their destination. Arrived at the terminus, she led the way down what seemed to be a country lane in process of transition into an urban street. On either side were recently-built small villas of Garden City type, each standing in a little plot of garden. The pavement had only just been put down. The road itself was imperfectly made. The whole neighbourhood, in the gloom of the evening, at any rate, was new and uninspiring. Many of the houses were empty—some still unfinished. The street lamps were weak and insufficient. Lionel Cutts stumbled once against a tub of mortar and a pile of bricks. He relieved himself by an expression to which his companion remained chivalrously deaf.

"You don't live down here, do you?" he asked her, doubtfully.

"Not I," she replied; "only father's a builder, and this last house belongs to him. I came down on my bike early this morning with a note, and—well, wait just a moment."

They had reached the end of the street now—a street which terminated in the open fields—and she pushed open the gate of the house in front of which they had paused. They groped their way up a little gravel path to the stuccoed front of the little villa. There was no light shining from any of the windows. The outline of the building only was dimly visible, rising out



"LIONEL CUTTS LIFTED HIS HAT AND LEFT THE PLACE, SOMEWHAT CHEERED."

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of a desert of immature garden. Beyond was the untouched country, a dark, uneven chaos, with a few trees close at hand standing up like black sentinels.

"Anyone living here?" the young man whispered.

She nodded.

"A retired colonel in the Army. He is father's tenant. I came down with a note this morning about some alterations, but no one answered the bell, so I strolled round and just glanced in at this window—this side one here. Step softly on the grass border. Now, have you got some matches? Don't say you haven't, for goodness' sake! I quite forget that it would be dark."

"I've got plenty of matches all right," Lionel Cutts assured her, drawing a box from his pocket. "Supposing anyone sees us hanging around here, though?"

"That's all right," she answered, briskly. "I left the note in the letter-box this morning, and I've come for an answer. Just strike a match and look in at the window. I want you to see it just as I did."

It was a dark night, but windless. The match, when once kindled, burned steadily. The young man held it close to the window and peered into a plainly-furnished but comfortable little dining-room. At first he could distinguish nothing except a white cloth upon the table. By degrees, however, he saw other things. The cloth was laid for a meal which had apparently been hastily abandoned. An empty decanter lay upon its side, and across the tablecloth was a dark stream of red wine. A glass by the side of the vacant place was still half-filled. There was a barely-touched cutlet upon the plate, and a napkin thrown in a heap upon a vegetable dish. A chair lay on its side where the diner had been sitting. The cloth had been dragged a little askew, and, staring at them with eyes like pin-pricks of fire and tail lifted straight into the air, was a tortoiseshell cat. It was mewing loudly and scratching the floor with its paws.

"What do you make of that?" the girl whispered. "It's just as it was this morning."

"Someone's done a skidoo in a hurry," Mr. Cutts observed, lighting another match. "I wonder," he added, his practical mind for the moment triumphing, "why the cat hasn't eaten the cutlet?"

The cat's red tongue shot out as it moved slowly towards them.



"'WHAT DO YOU MAKE OF THAT?' THE GIRL WHISPERED. 'IT'S JUST AS IT WAS THIS MORNING.'"

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It was at this precise moment that fear entered into the souls of both Lionel Cutts and Nancy Grey. It came from some hidden source and for some unexplained reason, but it seized a sure hold of them. The scene upon which the young man had glanced with the idlest curiosity became suddenly invested with a dim and creeping horror. There was something around them, something near which was terrifying. He struggled against it bravely, but his throat became dry and his knees began to shake. Then his companion spoke to him, and he knew that the change had come to her too. Her voice sounded faint and tremulous.

"Looks odd, doesn't it?" she faltered. "It was just like that this morning. I've been making-believe about it all day. One might fancy—almost anything."

"Almost anything!" he echoed, lighting another match and trying to believe that his fingers were trembling because of the cold. "Isn't there a servant or anyone in the house?"

"Got one coming to-morrow, he told father," she replied. "He seems rather proud of being able to do everything for himself just for a day or two—said he was an old campaigner. He must have gone away in a hurry. Don't let's stop any longer."

An immense relief seized upon the soul of Lionel Cutts at his companion's suggestion. Yet he remained for a moment motionless. Just inside the room the blazing eyes of the cat seemed to grow larger and larger. With arched back and wide-open mouth, she stood as close to the window as she could get, marking time with her paws and mewing more loudly than ever. Lionel Cutts forgot his surroundings.

"Hang that cat!" he muttered, more than ever conscious of the moisture upon his forehead.

"Let's go!" the girl begged, tugging at his arm and urging him to leave the uncanny spot. "We'll make up stories about this on the way home."

But Lionel Cutts, although his knees shook, and although the thought of a rapid flight towards the lights and the jingle of the electric car was like a dream of happiness, knew quite well that the moment for it had passed.

"There may be—a real story," he answered. "That cat is crying for help. Let's look in the other downstair room."

She caught him convulsively by the arm.

"It's silly," she faltered, "but I don't want to. I'm afraid! I want to get away, back to the lights. I want to run as fast as I can!"

"So do I, like the devil!" he groaned. "But we can't do it. Come along."

He led the way fearfully but doggedly. On the other side of the front door was another room, corresponding in size with the one into which they had been looking. They stole up to it on tip-toe. It, too, was uncurtained and blank. Cutts struck a match, held it down for a moment until the flame burned clearly, then up. Its light was sufficient. They saw in. The girl tried to shriek, but her voice broke piteously, and the sound which came was no more than a cracked and discordant whisper. As for her companion, a curious thing happened. The fear of a few seconds ago fell away from him. He found his brain working, his muscles tingling for action. How best to help—for help seemed sorely needed! On his side near the middle of the room, bound hand and foot with cruel cords, lay an elderly gentleman. His face was ghastly white, the veins were standing out upon his forehead, there were specks of blood upon his lips. His eyes were protruding—their stare was almost like the stare of the dead. A few feet away from him a man was on his knees before a small safe. His arms were clasped on the top of his head, he was swaying backwards and forwards, muttering to himself—and he was as black as jet.

"It's the elephant-rider from the circus!" Miss Grey faltered.

The young man's plan of campaign was already fixed. He had tried the window and found it fast. Suddenly he rained a hurricane of blows upon the panes with his ash stick. He found a place free of broken glass, placed his hand firmly upon it, and, with a skill acquired from practising over counters in his spare moments, he vaulted into the room of tragedy.

"What the devil's going on here?" he cried, as he struggled to recover his breath.

There was no reply. The man who lay upon the floor made weak but ineffectual efforts to expel the clumsily-fashioned gag from his mouth. The elephant-rider had risen, without undue haste, to his feet. He came slowly across the room. He walked with a curious noiselessness. The veneer of civilization acquired with his European clothes seemed to have fallen away from him. There was a wildness about his eyes, a threat in his very silence, alike terrifying. Lionel Cutts was miserably conscious of an immense inferiority of size and muscle. He gripped



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his ash stick firmly, but he felt like a pigmy defying a giant.

"What is the meaning of this?" he demanded once more, his voice weakening.

There was no answer. The elephant-rider leaned forward. Cutts struck at him fiercely, but, though the blow fell upon his head, the African never winced. With a sudden movement he seized Cutts in his arms. The two swayed backwards and forwards in an uneven struggle. Peering at them through the dim light, the girl, who had followed her escort into the room, began to scream. The African's long fingers had closed upon the young man's throat. Very slowly he commenced to strangle him. Cutts, almost from the first, was in desperate straits. He was in the hands of a man of twice his physical strength, a man, too, who seemed fired with a homicidal fury. He felt the cruel fingers burning at his throat, the hideous choking, the beginning of the black darkness. The girl rushed towards them. Suddenly she paused. The bound man upon the ground was trying to make her understand something. He was looking towards his pockets. She dropped on her knees by his side. When she stood up, for the first time in her life she held a little revolver. She looked at it and felt for the trigger. The colonel nodded eagerly. Once more she hastened across the room. Cutts had become limp now. The African held him in his arms —seemed about to dash him upon the floor. Her hand shook. There was a red fire dancing before her eyes. She dared not aim. She pressed the revolver suddenly against the body of the African and pulled the trigger desperately—once, twice, three times. Then she ran away, shrieking and wringing her hands. The room was full of smoke, hideous with the cries of the wounded man. Cutts sat on the floor, leaning against the wall, slowly recovering his breath. His face was black and his eyes staring.



"SHE PULLED THE TRIGGER DESPERATELY—ONCE, TWICE, THREE TIMES."

"My God!" he sobbed. "My God!"

It was the girl's turn now, and her courage,

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too, arrived at this hour of trial in the midst of their adventure. She first of all lit a candle, and then, with a knife, which she fetched from the dining-room, she cut the cords from the bound man, held wine to his lips, and passed it on to Lionel Cutts. All the time the elephant-rider lay groaning upon the floor, his breathing becoming fainter and fainter. He had rolled at first from side to side. Now he was almost still. The girl scarcely once glanced in his direction.

"Do you think I have killed him?" she moaned.

"Thundering good job if you have!" the colonel exclaimed. "Thank Heaven for your pluck, little girl! The brute! He's kept me here for nearly twenty-four hours, waiting for me to give him the word to unlock that safe."

"What is it? Jewels?" Lionel Cutts asked, as he staggered to his feet.

The colonel drew a long breath. Then he groped his way across the room and, with shaking fingers, adjusted the lock and opened the door of the safe. Upon the iron shelf was a small black image, and around its neck, hanging from a thread of gold wire, a single pearl.

"I brought it back from a temple in Central Africa," he explained. "They told me there'd be trouble, but I never dreamed they'd reach me here."

They all looked at the image, which seemed to be fashioned of some jet-black metal. The body was the body of a woman, the face hideous, yet fascinating.

"Some day I'll tell you the story," the colonel promised. "Just at present I've had enough of the thing."

He closed up the safe.

"I think," Cutts remarked, picking up his hat, "that we'll be going."

The colonel nodded.

"Can't talk to you to-night," he groaned. "Call at the police-station, will you, and tell them about this carcass. I'm going to lie down."

They stole out of the house. They held one another tightly all the way down the half-lit road. The horror of the night seemed to have afflicted them with a sort of mental paralysis. They scarcely spoke.

"Where is the police-station?" he asked, hoarsely.

"I'll stop the tram," she faltered.

They came out into the lights. He drew a great breath of relief. The rattle of an electric car sounded like music.

"We don't need to make-believe—about to-night!" he muttered.

A month later, on the occasion of Lionel Cutts's next journey to Norwich, Miss Nancy Grey and he dined with Colonel Ransome at the Grand Hotel. They had all become normal again, but the horror of that night had left behind it a certain effect. It was a very pleasant dinner, and the colonel talked to them for some time of his wanderings in Africa and his many remarkable adventures there. Finally, towards the close of the evening, he touched upon the one subject which, up till then, they had managed to avoid.

"I've presented that idol to the British Museum," he said, "and I've sold the pearl. Deuced valuable it was, too! The first jeweller I showed it to gave me a thousand pounds for it. And now, you two young people," he went on, "I'd like to tell you both what I am going to do with that thousand pounds."

Miss Grey, who was really an exceedingly practical young woman, nodded with an air of keen interest.

"I've invested it for the present," the colonel continued, "and it's going to be handed over as a dowry to the first young lady of my acquaintance of whose matrimonial plans I approve. Don't happen to know of anyone, do you, Miss Nancy?"

She sat, for a moment, quite still. There was a shade of pink in her cheeks. Mr. Lionel Cutts coughed.

"We thought some time next autumn, sir," he remarked. "I am to have a small share in the business then."

"Congratulate you both!" the colonel declared, heartily. "It's just the answer I was hoping for. The money's ready any time."

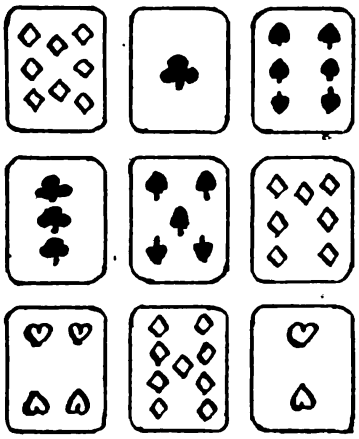
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# PERPLEXITIES.

## By HENRY E. DUDENEY.

### 205.—CARD MAGIC SQUARES.

THROW out the twelve court cards from an ordinary pack. Now, with nine of the remainder (different suits are of no consequence), form the annexed magic square, in which the pips add up to fifteen in eight different ways. The puzzle is, with the remaining cards (without disturbing this arrangement), to form three more such magic squares, so that each of the four shall add up to a different sum in the required directions. There will, of course, be four cards in the reduced pack that will not be used. These four may be any that you choose to discard. Remember that the four squares must all sum differently.

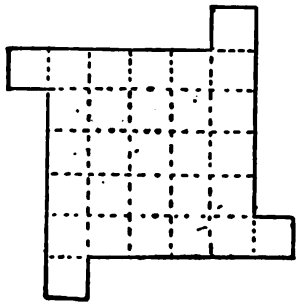


### 206.—THE NEW GUN.

WE all know that the Swiss navy is unconquerable and indestructible. The Government of Switzerland was approached by an inventor who undertook that a new gun which he had manufactured, when once loaded, would fire fifteen shots at the rate of a shot a minute. A series of tests was made, and the gun certainly fired fifteen shots in a quarter of an hour. The Government refused to buy the gun. Why?

### 207.—A NEW CUTTING-OUT PUZZLE.

IT often happens that the easiest dissection puzzles are the prettiest. Here is a new one that ought to give the reader very little trouble. Cut the figure into five pieces that will fit together and form a square.



### 208.—THE THREE VILLAGES.

I SET out the other day to ride in a motor-car from Acrefield to Butterford, but by mistake I took the road going *viâ* Cheesebury, which is nearer Acrefield than Butterford, and is twelve miles to the left of the direct road I should have travelled. After arriving at Butterford I found that I had gone thirty-five miles. What are the three distances between these villages, each being a whole number of miles? The three roads are quite straight.

### 209.—A BURIED PROVERB.

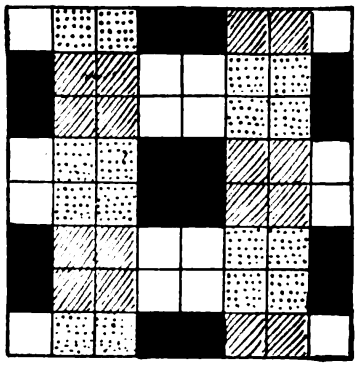
IN each of the following sentences a word is concealed. Read them in the order given, and they will form a very familiar proverb:—

1. A naughty cat ran away. 2. They found a closely written roll in gathering up the rubbish. 3. It is the best one that I have ever seen. 4. The rug at her stairway is not a valuable one. 5. He is an old acquaintance of mine. 6. Amos soon saw through the stratagem.

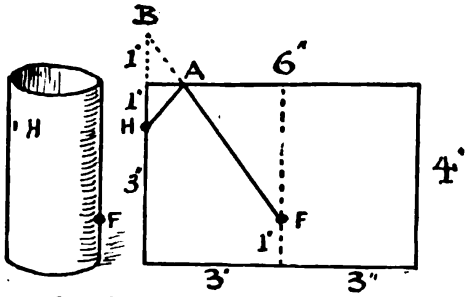
## Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles.

### 200.—THE TESSELLATED TILES.

DISCARD the last tile in each of the four horizontal rows. Then the remaining sixteen may be arranged as shown in the illustration in accordance with the conditions.

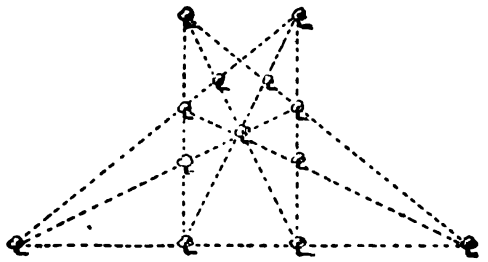


### 201.—THE FLY AND THE HONEY.




IN the first diagram we have the vessel. The drop of honey is represented by H, on the inside; the fly by F, on the outside. The fly clearly has to go over the edge to the other side. Now, imagine we are dealing with a cylinder of cardboard. If we cut it we can lay it out flat, as in the second diagram. If we then extend the line of the side one inch to B, the line FB will cut the edge at A, which will be the point at which the fly must go over. The shortest distance is thus the hypotenuse of a right-angled triangle, whose height is 4 and base 3. This we know is 5, so that the fly has to go exactly five inches.

### 202.—ANOTHER TREE-PLANTING PUZZLE.



THE illustration shows the graceful manner of planting the trees so as to get nine rows with four trees in every row.

### 203.—EXCAVATIONS.

THE buried words are as follows: Utah, Nelson, Melba, Malta, Meredith, Wagner, Andover, Rubens, Monoplane.

### 204.—AN ALPHABETICAL PUZZLE.

ABSTEMIOUSLY.

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# CUTHBERTSON'S EXHIBITION.

## By E. TEMPLE THURSTON.

### Illustrated by Graham Simmons.

YOU must imagine the interest aroused in his club when Alexander Cuthbertson announced that he was going into the prize-ring that night for an exhibition three rounds. As you know, there is some talk about prize-fighting now. Ladies are making it popular.

Cuthbertson, tall enough to be in any regiment of the Guards, had had lessons from one of the professionals—invited to hit his man whenever or however he could, and sometimes imagining that he had done it.

" Apart from the exercise," he said, " it's a good thing. You never know when you're going to come in for a scrap in the street."

Men in the club who had never seen a prize-fight—who, moreover, never wished to see one—looked up to him in more senses than one as a fellow with some grit in him.

" Of course, I've got a tremendous reach," said he. " So the pro. tells me. As near as a toucher I knocked him out the other day. Well, he said to me, ' You mustn't hit like that, sir—not when we're just sparring.' "

Cuthbertson told these little stories about his boxing lessons. Ladies, he knew, listened to them open-mouthed. He did not explain that the blow he had delivered on that occasion had not landed. It struck the air, and with such force that the remark already referred to had fallen from the professional as a matter of advice.

Nobody thought of asking him what the professional was doing while Cuthbertson was hitting him with these tremendous blows. Indeed, Cuthbertson himself forgot to realize that he was hitting something which only retaliated with defence.

" How should I do," he asked his instructor one day, " in a proper contest, ten rounds in the ring, with two-ounce gloves ? "

The professional was thinking of the fees for his lessons when he replied that he expected Cuthbertson would wipe the floor with some men.

" Of course, I've got a tremendous reach," said Cuthbertson, and for answer the professional held out his arm, measuring it against that of his pupil. The comparison was ludicrous. Cuthbertson could give him five inches.

" That'ud stand me in good stead, you know," said he.

The instructor looked at the delicate arm, the fair skin, and the tender muscles.

" It ought to," said he.

" I think I shall have a go some day," said Cuthbertson. " I don't want to boast, of course, but if I were any good I wouldn't mind going in for the heavy-weight championship. Rather a fine thing, you know, for a gentleman amateur to win that. That'ud buck up the spirit of boxing in this country. We're getting a chicken-hearted lot."

" Why not try an exhibition three rounds first," suggested his instructor—" just three two-minute rounds ? They'd be very glad to have you in one of those rings down the other side of the river."

This was the result of that suggestion. An exhibition bout of three rounds, two minutes each round, was fixed up with the manager of one of the boxing rings on the Surrey side. Cuthbertson told his valet about it that morning while he was being dressed.

" Who's the man you're fighting with, sir ? "

" Oh, he *was* the heavy-weight champion of Sydney, in Australia. He hasn't been fighting for some years, but I understand he may go back into the ring again. He's a hefty chap, I expect. Well, a champion heavy-weight— "

At lunch in the club he ate a chop—no more.

" Better just get in a bit of training," said he. " I haven't smoked a cigarette to-day."

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"Going to knock your man out?" someone asked him.

"Not in an exhibition round," said Cuthbertson. "It's not a real fight, you know. But the manager asked me to be careful. The pro. probably told him, I should think, that I'd got a punch up my sleeve."

"Will there be any blood?" asked a youthful member.

"You can never tell," said Cuthbertson.

He gave a dinner to a lady friend of his and took her down with him to the ring. At dinner he ate but little, though he drank champagne and had two liqueurs.

"Isn't that bad for you?" she asked.

"Oh, no—it isn't as if it were ten rounds. Anyone can last out three; they don't really have to train for it."

He lit a cigar and they went down together in a taxi. She was very nervous, she said. Indeed, she had never seen a fight in her life. But he set her mind at ease.

"I don't think I shall have much difficulty with the man I'm going to fight," he told her. "In any case, it's only an exhibition bout. We sha'n't hurt each other."

But, in the heart of him, Cuthbertson had determined to put his man out with one of those terrific left punches with which he had so often narrowly missed the professional. He wanted to surprise her. He wanted to surprise them all.

In the dressing-rooms was that pungent human scent as the men came in and out from their fights. He thought with some appreciation of the scented bath which he would have as soon as he got home. When the manager came in to see if he was ready, he was sitting in a rather elaborate dressing-gown, turning the ends of his moustache and waiting with pleasurable expectation for his turn to come.

"Feeling fit, sir?" asked the manager.

"Oh—fit as a flea," said he. "You know, this sort of thing does one a lot of good. Makes you appreciate the comforts of your own home."

"What sort of thing?" the manager inquired.

"Well—these dressing-rooms."

"What's the matter with 'em?"

"They're not supposed to be palaces, of course," Cuthbertson replied, with tact; and without tact, he added, "a bit niffy too, ain't they?"

This was not his usual method of speech. He was doing as the Romans do in Rome.

"Niffy?" said the manager. "There's nothing to object to in that."

"Of course—of course—nothing," said Cuthbertson, and thought again of his lavender bath salts at home.

"Well, if you're ready now, we may as well begin," said the manager.

Cuthbertson followed him into the glare of lights. He allowed his eye just to wander in the direction of his lady friend, and, full of confidence, not that he had seen her, he smiled. Then he climbed up into the ring, realizing that his opponent was already in his corner.

Taking the opposite corner, he glanced across at his man, sizing him up and calculating that he must be at least fifteen years his senior. "He'll feel those fifteen years after the first round," he thought.

Confidence was still easy and prominent in his mind. He leant back in his seat, lolling his arms over the ropes as his seconds flapped the towels about his head. As he had climbed up into the ring, there had been a murmur of "Ohs!" through the building at the size of man that he was. He thought of his reach and knew that it was a foregone conclusion. He had never felt so confident of anything in his life.

"'Ave a drop of water on your face, sir?" whispered one of the seconds to him, holding up a dirty sponge, on which Cuthbertson thought he saw some signs of blood from the previous contest.

"It's not clean water—is it?" he asked.

"Well, sir—only two or three fights before this one."

"No—I don't want any," said Cuthbertson.

The manager's assistant came up at this moment and asked him whether he wished his own name to be called out.

"Oh, no, I don't think so," said he. "That would rather look like side."

"What shall I say, then, sir—Jones of Lambeth?"

"Yes—Jones—but not Lambeth. Say—Kensington."

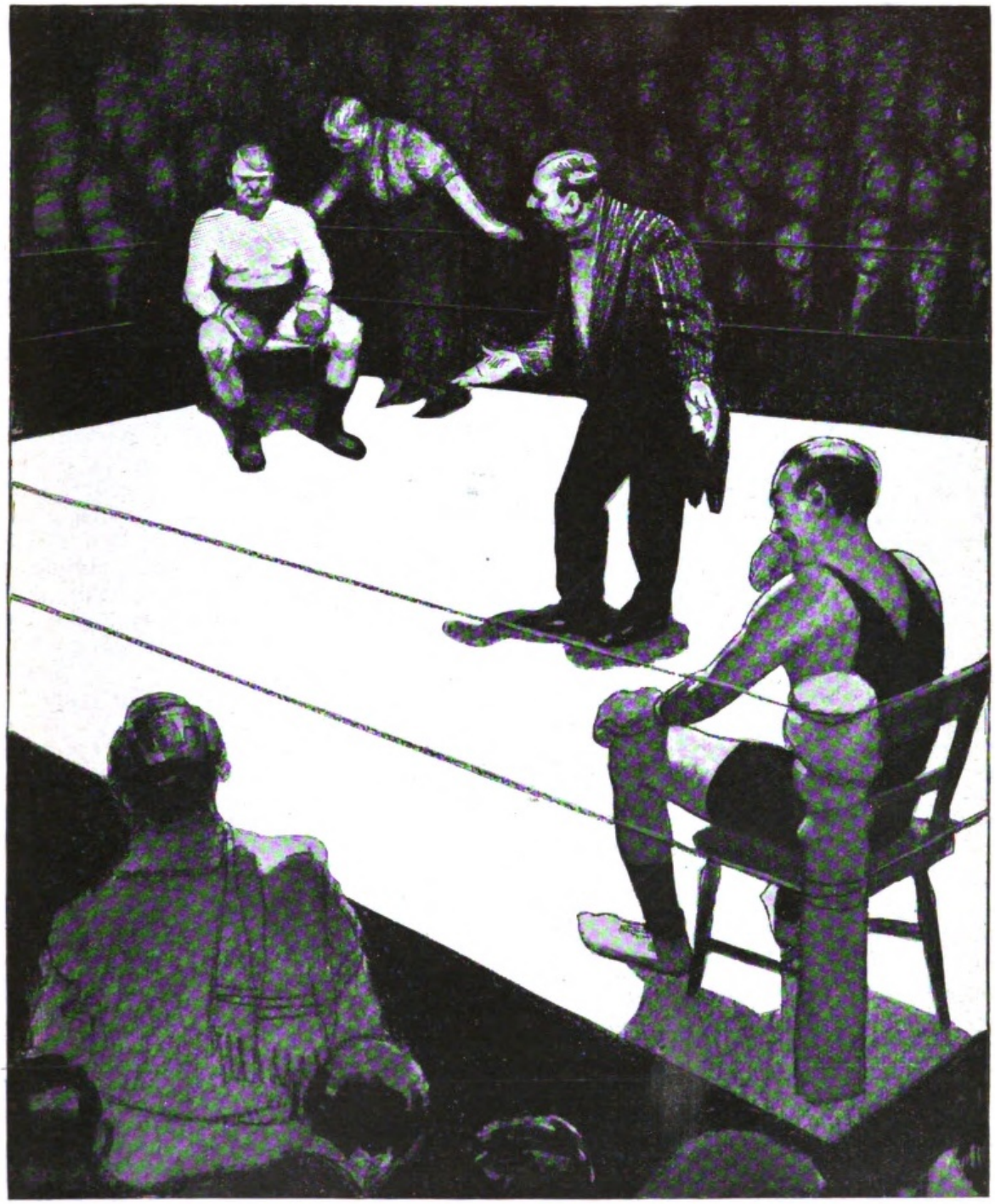
The assistant strode into the middle of the ring.

"An exhibition bout," he cried, "of three rounds—two minutes each round. On my right, Knock-out Stitcher of Sydney, Australia; on my left, Harry Jones of Kensington."

Cuthbertson concealed a smile with his glove, hiding it so that everyone could see his amusement. He—Cuthbertson—to hear himself called "Harry Jones of Kensington"! It was really rather amusing. Of course, everyone must know. But why did the other man call himself "*Knock-out* Stitcher"?

The gong went. He jumped to his feet

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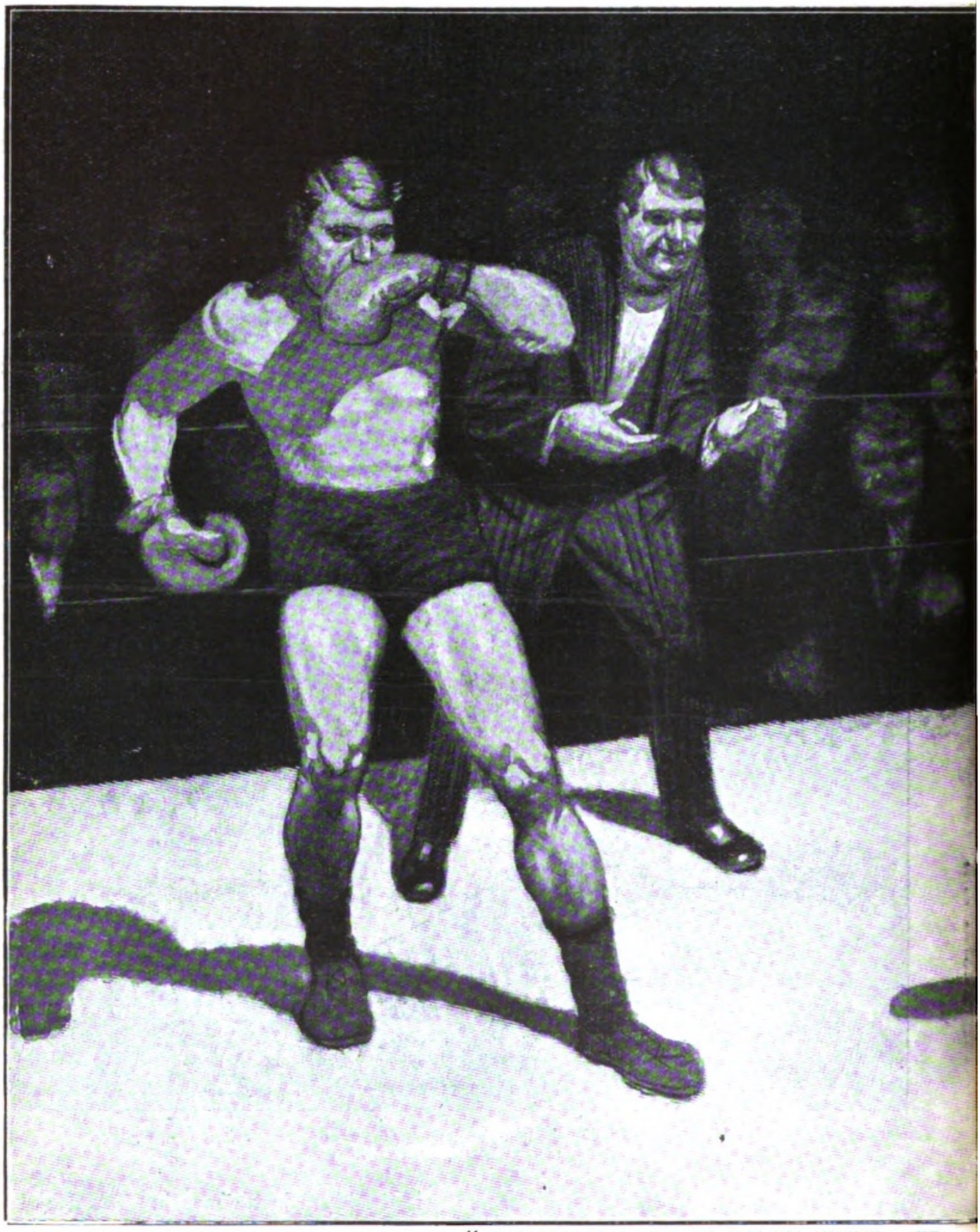
"ON MY RIGHT, KNOCK-OUT STITCHER OF SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA. ON MY LEFT, HARRY JONES OF KENSINGTON."

with all his confidence beaming in his face. He forgot, however, the formality of shaking hands—indeed, was just about to square up, when he saw the gloves of the Knock-out Stitcher extended to him. He lowered his own to do the proper thing, when the Australian, thinking there were to be no such formalities and expecting a blow on the body, hit his man a sharp punch on the mouth. Cuthbertson's lips were cut against his teeth; he felt the blood in his mouth. The fight had begun.

From that moment the whole house rose to a shout of laughter. Very distantly it sounded in Cuthbertson's ears. The Australian had hit him, he had drawn blood; then he should feel the weight of Cuthbertson's great punch, and at once, without delay.

Disregarding all defence—for until that moment he had never been hit before—he

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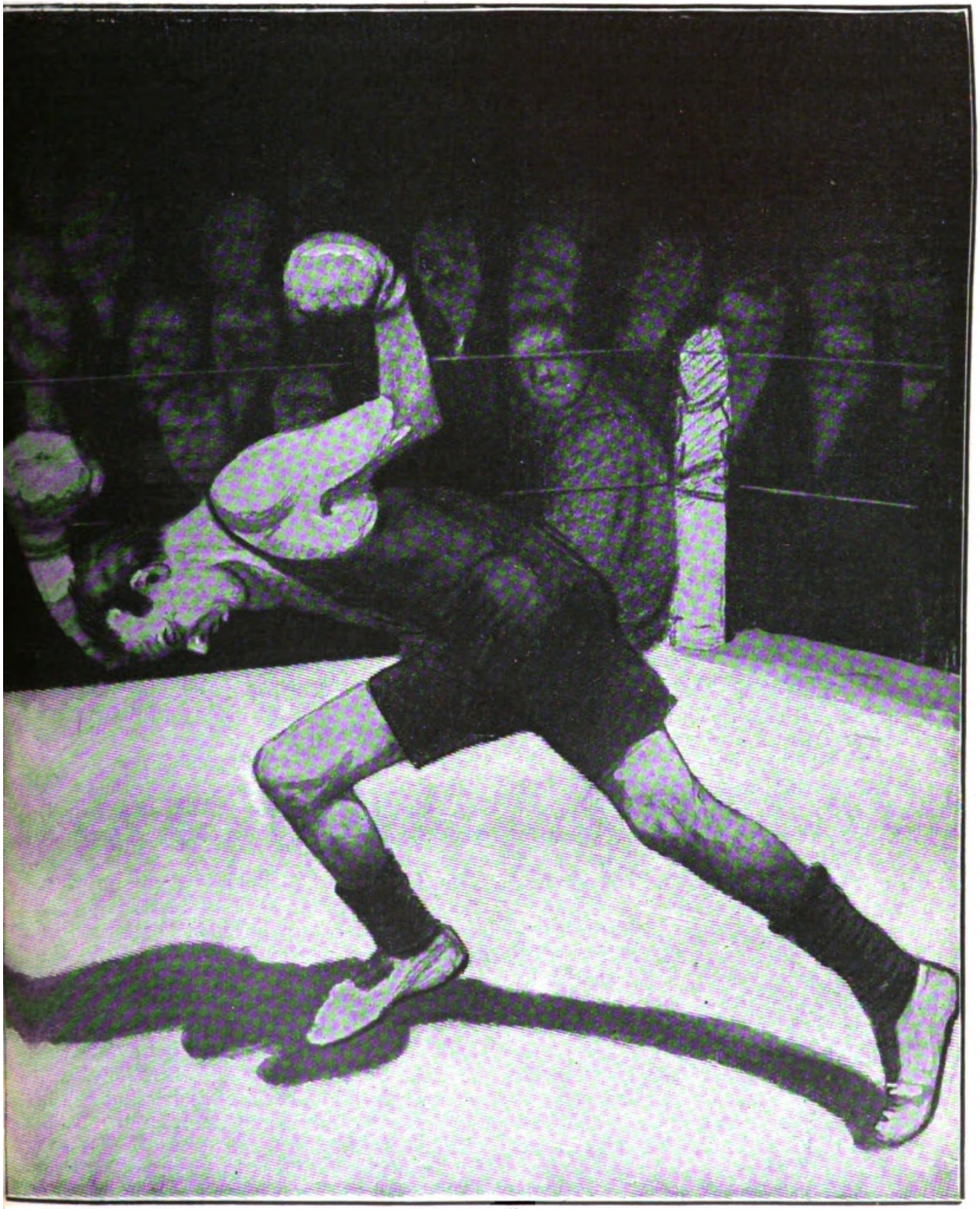


"SUDDENLY IT SEEMED HE SAW HIS CHANCE. HE

rushed in with that tremendous upper-cut he had often practised in his bath-room at home. Undoubtedly it would have stretched his man upon the boards, unconscious for a week, if it had landed, but before he reached the Australian something had fallen from somewhere with a sickening weight upon his mouth again. His great blow missed by a yard as he staggered back, dazed and bewildered to think that he had been hit.

"I must guard myself a bit better," he thought. "The pro. said, 'Always keep cool.' I'm not cool—I'm excited." He squared up again, muttering to himself, "Keep cool,

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SHUT HIS EYES, LOWERED HIS HEAD, AND RUSHED."

keep cool." But before he could say it a third time, so as to really plant it in his mind, he felt as though a horse had kicked him between the eyes. And then the bell rang.

This was greeted with shouts of laughter from the crowd, for scarcely half a minute had gone. The time-keeper had stepped in to save him.

But Cuthbertson knew nothing about that.

"Well, I've lasted through that round," said he. "Now, if I can only upper-cut him."

But when the seconds were called out of the ring and the matter had to be faced again,



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he had lost a greater part of that confidence. The fact was, he was being made aware of someone else in the ring besides himself, and this was no other than Knock-out Stitcher of Sydney, Australia. Still, he must upper-cut him. He was an ugly-looking devil. It would be quite a good thing to make a mess of him. He could imagine how the sympathies of his lady friend in the balcony—even supposing she were no friend of his—would be all against this ugly devil with his heavy, pendulous jaw.

They were both sparring for an opening, and Cuthbertson's old confidence was returning. He was going to keep cool until he got his chance. There was no fear of this fellow hitting him again—if he kept cool. In a moment when there seemed no hint of trouble, he cast his eye up into the balcony to see how plainly his friend's sympathies would be written in her face. He had seen professionals do this in the ring—look at a friend in the audience and smile.

It was rather difficult to find her. Indeed, he picked out the wrong girl, and was just about to smile at her when he felt the smile crushed against his teeth at the same moment that he fell heavily to the floor.

Again the bell went. Again that shout of laughter from all sides. This was a shorter round than the first. It seemed long enough, however, to Cuthbertson. He regarded the prospect of the third with no little discomfort of mind. Two rounds had gone by and he had not brought off his upper-cut. He was beginning to wonder if he ever would, for his breath was coming in gasps and life was not such a glorious thing as it had been five minutes ago. He spat some blood into the basin the seconds held out for him, and wondered, when he saw it, if he was badly hurt. What a pity it was not two rounds! It would have been over by now. It was this third round his mind revolted at. Now, if they had chosen a lighter man for him, he would have stood a much better chance.

"Lucky the gong went when it did," he said to one of his seconds. "I might have been counted out."

"You might, sir," said the second, "but you're tough enough for 'im yet."

"What am I doing that's wrong?" asked Cuthbertson, with some simplicity.

"Well, you're not hitting 'im, sir."

"Yes—I thought that was what it was," said Cuthbertson. "I must upper-cut him," and, as the gong went for the last round, he strode once more from his corner determined to do it then.

He upper-cut right enough—great lunging blows, at every one of which the people cried out, "Oh! Ah!" He knew they would think something of them. So would the Knock-out Stitcher as soon as ever one of them landed. But a sickening feeling of cautious apprehension in the pit of his stomach kept him from going too near his man. Accordingly those tremendous blows were all of them a good yard short. And they were tiring work. His breath was going.

But suddenly it seemed he saw his chance. The Stitcher was wiping his nose with the back of his glove—a foolish thing to do when there were such blows as his about. Cuthbertson seized that chance. He shut his eyes, lowered his head, and rushed.

Once or twice when he had got excited he had done this with the professional. Then he had been only pushed away, because the pro. was a first-class man and knew how to manage him. But this chap was not first-class. He knew it was his chance, and it was a mighty rush. Then something bewildering happened. He had got his eyes shut so that he could not see how it occurred, but something that seemed to rise out of the floor below him met his face and flung him erect. He opened his eyes to see what had happened, and the Stitcher's left flung out like a hammer on his nose.

He fell again, wondering where he was. Should he get up? What was the good? He could have got up, but it was better where he was. This was the last round; if he did not get up there would be no more of this. His little friend in the balcony would be feeling greater sympathy for him if he did not rise. He could even imagine tears in her eyes.

He chose wisdom. He lay where he was.

They helped him back to his dressing-room, and there gave him a note from his little friend.

"I can't bear it," she had written. "I've seen two fights and I daren't look at any more. You are so strong I know you'll hurt the other man. I've gone home."

"Well, I might have hurt him," said Cuthbertson to himself. "I might have—if I'd upper-cut him."

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# CONAN DOYLE'S

GREAT NEW

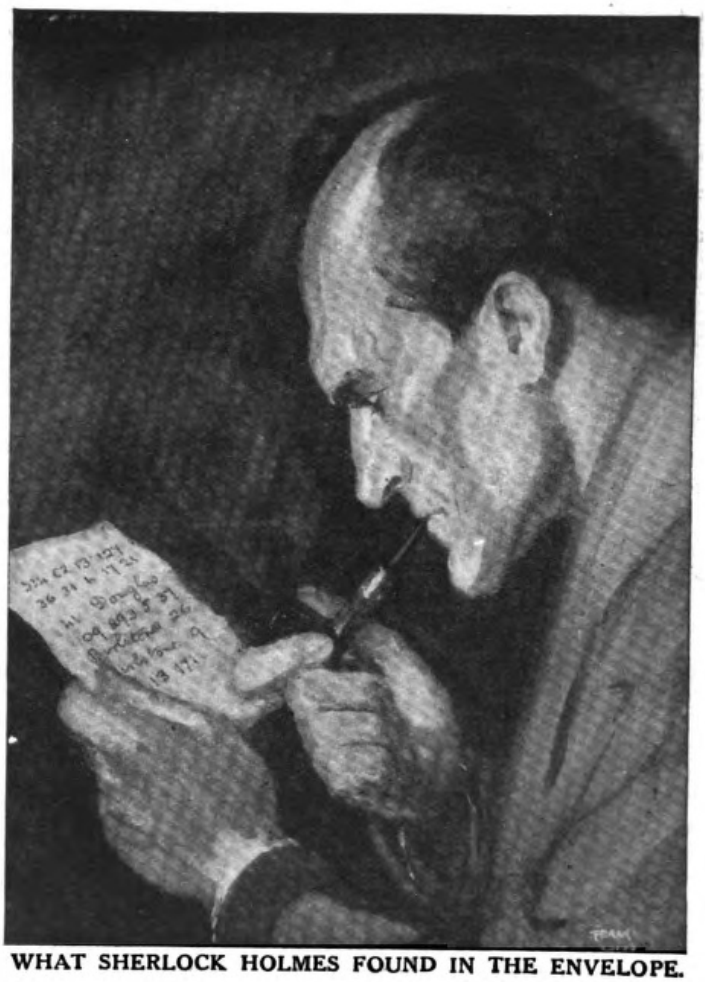
# SHERLOCK HOLMES

SERIAL

## "The Valley of Fear"

THRILLING WITH
INCIDENT AND
EXCITEMENT

***WILL COMMENCE IN OUR NEXT NUMBER***



WHAT SHERLOCK HOLMES FOUND IN THE ENVELOPE.

The Valley of Fear.

Part I

The Manor house of Birlstone

Chap I. The Warning

"I am inclined to think —" said I Watson

"I should do so" Sherlock Holmes remarked interrupted impatiently.

I believe that I among of Watson was the most long suffering of mortals but I admit a flush that I was annoyed at the sardonic interruption of annoyance came to his cheeks.

"Really, Holmes" said I severely "you are a little annoying trying at times"

He Holmes was too much absorbed with his own thoughts to give to my remonstrance. any immediate answer. He leaned upon his hand, with his untasted breakfast before him, and he stared at the slip of paper which he had just drawn from its envelope.

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FACSIMILE OF THE MS. OF THE OPENING WORDS OF "THE VALLEY OF FEAR."

# "As Funny as They Can."

The following section is the first of a series founded upon an entirely new idea—a different well-known humorous artist assuming the post of editor every month and doing his best to make his particular instalment "as funny as he can."

Arrangements have already been made with the following artists:—

***H. M. BATEMAN, JOHN HASSALL, W. HEATH ROBINSON, TONY SARG, HARRY ROUNTREE, CHARLES PEARS.***

It will be interesting to hear from our readers at the end of a few months which editor they consider has been most successful in making them laugh.

---

MR. ALFRED LEETE, with whose work as an artist readers of "The Strand Magazine" are well acquainted, is responsible for the present number. Mr. Leete has paid a graceful compliment to the editors of contemporary periodicals, whose ranks he has thus momentarily joined, by devoting the space placed at his disposal to caricaturing some of their most popular "features."




MR. ALFRED LEETE.

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# THE THEATRICAL PAGE



Miss Gismonda De La Vere Haigh-De La Vere, who has been scoring such a great success in the back row of the chorus in the new *revue* at the Insipidity Theatre, *No Smoking in the Lift*, has been ordered a complete rest by her physicians. Interviewed by our representative at her Park Lane residence, the charming lady confirmed the news, adding that the great mental and physical exhaustion induced by shouting "Hullo, boys, here we are!" and eating cotton-wool ices nightly had brought about a complete nervous breakdown. "Give your dear readers my *best* love, please," she said, "and tell them that I hope soon to be back at work. Do I love my work? Why, my work is my greatest joy, and I am never happier than when appearing before the large-hearted British public, to whom I owe so much. I live entirely for my art, and I quite agree with that very clever person who said something —I cannot remember what—about art for art's sake. Yes, I hope to marry into the peerage before very long. Would you care to accept these thirty-seven picture-postcards of me, not *necessarily* for publication, but as a guarantee of good faith?" During her absence the part of Dotty Dolittle, which she has made so peculiarly her own, will be played by Miss Gwladwys Featherstone-Mountjoy, whom our readers will no doubt remember as the talented young soubrette who delivered the line "No, thanks," so naively in the present *revue's* predecessor.

Mr. Louisville N. Barker's next Shakespearean production, we understand, is to be a revival of *King Henry VI.*, and in order that the three parts may be presented in continuity upon the same evening the whole of the actors, dressers, scene-shifters, property-masters, etc., are taking a course of long-distance training under the ægis of the Surrey Walking Club.

A benefit *matinée* will be given next week at the Penumbra Theatre of Varieties on behalf of that veteran actor, Mr. Philip Flatfoot, who, after achieving extraordinary success as the hind legs of the dromedary in *Josephine and Her Sisters*, "noises heard off" in the Puddleton Pageant, and a prawn in a recent provincial pantomime, has at length fallen upon bad days. A most attractive programme has been arranged, in which it is hoped that all the celebrated actors and actresses who have promised faithfully to appear will make it convenient to keep their promises faithfully. Engagements permitting, Sir Albert Trebohm has kindly consented to recite "Paradise Lost"; Mr. Tate R. Tate will present, engagements permitting, his new sketch, *Winkling;* Sir Alexander George (meetings of the L.C.C. permitting) and company will appear in the second entr'acte of the sartorial comedy, *An Ideal Wristband;* while Mme. Clarette Cuppe has announced her intention of singing, engagements permitting. The famous *corps de ballet* of the Penumbra will positively appear in any event, as they have been told they have *got* to.

The Tiny Theatre will shortly be reopened with a new farci-comedy, *Logic*, by Mr. J. K. Jesterton. The play is now being actively rehearsed under the supervision of the author, for which purpose the stage has been enlarged and strengthened. On and after the opening night it will be preceded by a new one-act play by Mr. George Bernshaw, entitled *Galantine*, described as "a cursory study in expletives," in which the characters are a bargee and an old horse-bus driver.

That exceedingly fine play, *Toasts*, by the rising young Danish dramatist, Ib Henriksen, has now celebrated its second performance, which event was made the occasion for a souvenir night. Unfortunately, only one member of the audience received the souvenir—a handsome portfolio containing portraits of the lessee, stage manager, business manager, and box-office keeper —as the other left before the distribution at the end of the first act. We understand that the Advanced Drama Society, under whose auspices the play is being presented, are contemplating a revival of *East Lynne*, when a successor shall be needed.

Mr. C. Moore Rix and Miss Formaline Terrace are shortly to give a "flying" *matinee* at Cork of their successful play, *Carraway Scones*, returning the same day in time for the regular evening performance at the Lycopodium. For the sake of the exercise Mr. Rix has decided to walk both ways, but the remainder of his company will travel by the new magneto-repulsion system.

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# The Ladies' Page



BOOFLES.—Thank you, dear, for the pretty muffin you made for me. I am using it at present as a pen-wiper, but when it "sets" a little firmer I shall employ it as a paper-weight. With regard to your question, "What can be done with old linseed poultices?" I am afraid I cannot help you. Have you tried offering them to the charwoman? So sorry your savoury did not prove a success, but if you mistake ammoniated quinine for tomato catsup what *can* you expect? Yes, I like your *nom-de-plume*.

MINERVA wishes to crochet an elastic stocking for her *fiancé*, who is troubled with a fatted calf, and wants to know if I can recommend her a suitable pattern. She might try this: 4 chain, 3 treble, 1 contralto; then slip one and repeat. Proceed with 2 l.b.w., 1 i.o.u., 3 r.s.v.p. until stocking is the required size.

DOUBLE-SIX.—I am distressed about your freckles, but try and take heart from the fact that nearly all of the world's most famous women have been freckled, though I cannot recall the name of one for the moment. Freckles cannot be *cured*, but they can be burnt off with a red-hot knitting-needle, leaving scars which can in turn be removed, but I don't know how.

VIYELLA.—You are quite wrong. Pushkin was a Russian poet, not an instrument for inserting ribbon into *lingerie*.

EVE wants to know how she can best spend her small dress allowance. I have given the most careful consideration to your question, EVE, and I unhesitatingly recommend you to spend it on clothes. Am so glad you find my notes helpful.

IMPATIENT.—I never answer telegrams written on both sides of the paper.

CURLY-LOCKS is in a difficulty. She had the misfortune to lose all her hair in a bathing accident last summer, since when she has been using a much-advertised hair-restorer. New hair is growing, but it is coming in patches of black and white. Beggars, dear, cannot afford to be choosers. Surely it is worse to be quite bald than piebald!

CAREFUL WIFE has saved up all the holes in her gloves and stockings, and now, having a considerable number, wants to know how she can use them. Only two methods occur to me at the moment: you might knit them together to form a hammock, or send them to a Gruyère cheese factory. Many thanks for the group-photo of your children. Is the one on the left, leaning against what looks like a piece of the Giant's Causeway, quite right in his head?

SAPPHIRA says she has been a reader of this charming paper for fourteen years, and would be much obliged if I will lend her threepence. As this paper has only been in existence two years, SAPPHIRA, I can only call you a bare-faced toyer with the truth. I am, however, sending you threepence by registered letter, less postage and registration fee.

DISILLUSIONED writes: "I am troubled about my engagement. I have just discovered that one of Harold's arms is a cork one. Can I break it off?" Certainly not. Such useless destruction would be sheer vandalism.

AUNTIE DE LUVIAN.

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# GRAPE GUSH.

## BIG BOOST FOR BACCHUS.

**U.S. Ambassador Unbuttons His Face, Throws His Hooks Into "Prohibition," And Gives the Grape the Glad Hand.**

## HOT SHOT FOR SAINT SYPHON.

**CONSTERNATION in the COCOA CAMP.**

# SODA STOCKS SLUMP SOME.

***"Dry" Goods Market Demoralized.***

---

A despatch from London (Eng.) declares that Dr. Page, the United States Ambassador to the Court of St. James, at a public dinner last night made a speech into which he introduced a quotation from the Eastern poet, Omar Khayyám, praising the juice of the grape.

—*Laughin' News Agency.*

MUCH FROM LITTLE—A STUDY IN AMERICAN "SCARE" HEADLINES.

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# THE SPORTING PAGE.



A record number of entries has been secured for the All-England Battledore and Shuttlecock Tournaments to be held at Wimbledon next month, every player of note having signified his intention of competing. I shall be surprised if Mr. Reekes Macgillycuddy, the young American player, does not once again contest the Finals for the Gentlemen's Singles with the present champion, Mr. Wildfire—the former having now perfected himself in a new screw-back service which causes the shuttlecock to return to the server after the manner of a well-trained boomerang.

A rolling stone is worth two at a push, says the proverb, and therefore I trust that the difficulties attending the proposed marble-match of 18,000 up between Stevens and Grayson may soon be smoothed away. Grayson, it appears, has stipulated that glass alleys shall be used, while Stevens refuses to play unless the Elgin marbles are employed. Efforts are being made, however, to induce both players to adopt the benzoline marble, and all lovers of the great game will join with me in hoping that this will prove to be the solution of the difficulty.

I regret to learn that Mr. Jolly Soul's horse, "Butler's Baton," twice winner of Doggett's Coat and Badge, is suffering from cracked knuckles, and will not run, as expected, in the Waterloo Cup at the Oval next week.

Articles have now been signed by "Wal" Woffler, the holder of the Lonsdale Bantam-weight Championship Braces, and "Gus" Guzzler, the coloured Overweight Champion, to eat hard-boiled eggs for a stake of sixpence a side and a silk purse made out of a sow's ear, offered by the *Feathered World*. The "White Hope," whose most recent achievement was the administering of the "blow-out" at the thirty-first egg to the hitherto-undefeated "Chick" Chewer, is at present in training at Egham, and experts who have seen him at work on the swallowing-ball, and observed his method of treating home-made doughnuts, predict an easy victory for him—notwithstanding that his opponent has an advantage of three inches in the size of his mouth, besides a very much larger cubic capacity. The match is expected to take place at the Eggcentric Club, and Colonel Newnham-Davis has consented to act as referee. In proof of the great interest this match has aroused I am pleased to be able to announce that all the eggs required for the contest will be the gift of Mr. Macready MacPhelps, who has lately been touring the provinces in *Hamlet*.

Arrangements have now been completed for the three Test Rounders matches between England and Australia. The first will be played in Oxford Circus, the second in the Rotunda of the Bank of England, and the third in the Albert Hall. Each of these matches will be specially reported for this journal by well-known literary men, and in successive numbers will appear descriptions from the pens of Dr. Robert Bridges (which will be in verse of the rondeau form), Mr. G. K. Chesterton, and Mr. Bernard Shaw. The latter gentleman's version will be specially Bowdlerized, before publication, by an eminent clergyman.

CAPTAIN KIDD.

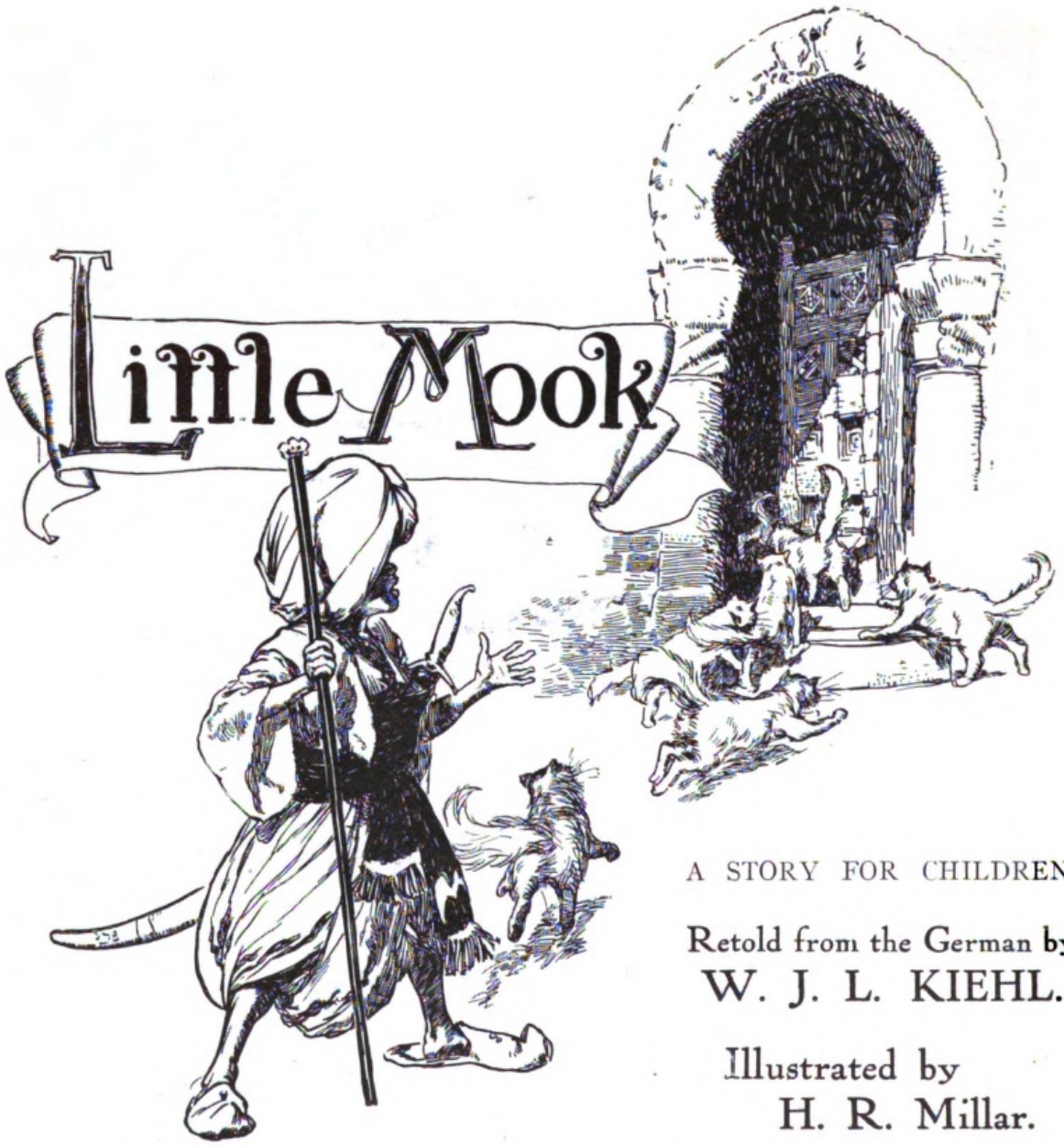
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A PAGE DRAWING.
*By Alfred Leete.*

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# Little Mook



A STORY FOR CHILDREN.

Retold from the German by
W. J. L. KIEHL.

Illustrated by
H. R. Millar.

LITTLE MOOK was the son of a poor citizen of Bussorah. His real name was Mookrah, but everyone called him Little Mook, because he was such a tiny little fellow, who had never grown any taller since he was seven years old. The only big thing about Mook was his head; it was bigger than the head of a grown-up man, and the effect of this enormous cannon-ball on such a frail little body was irresistibly comical. His father was so ashamed of Mook's appearance that he never allowed him out of the house. Mook was fourteen years old when his father died, burdened with debts, leaving his son to the mercy of his realtives.

To every one of these relatives Mook's father owed a sum of money, so none of them felt particularly kindly disposed towards Mook. They sold the house and all that was in it, and told the little fellow he had better go out into the world and seek his fortune. Now, Mook knew so little of the world that he was not a whit afraid of being sent out to shift for himself; he fancied it would be quite easy to make his fortune. The only things that troubled him were his clothes, which were quite worn out, so he begged very hard to be allowed to have his father's old work-a-day things, also his turban and his scimitar. The relatives grudgingly consented, but felt themselves amply rewarded for their charity by the hearty laugh they had when they saw Mook in his new outfit, all tucked around his little body. The big turban

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made his head seem even bigger than before, and the long scimitar stuck in the broad girdle trailed behind him on the ground. Most ridiculous of all were his tiny feet in his father's enormous slippers, that caused him to trip and fall every few paces. But Mook did not know he was ridiculous; he was proud of his new finery, thanked his relations for their goodness to him, and set out full of hope to seek his fortune.

He did not know where to go, but that did not matter; a fortune was waiting for him somewhere, and he would be sure to reach it. So he stepped out bravely into the Unknown. It had been early morning when he left Bussorah. At noon the unaccustomed exercise had tired the little fellow, so he sat down to rest under a palm tree. A short nap restored him and gave him back his courage. On he went again, and when he saw the minarets of a large city loom through the hazy distance all his hope returned, and he felt sure that someone in that large town would say to him, "Come, poor little Mook, you must be hungry, so I will give you a good supper." But when at last the town was reached and he had passed through many of its streets without a friendly door opening to him his heart sank once more. At that very moment, however, the upper window of a house was thrown open and an old woman appeared. In a sing-song voice she chanted:—

Come, come at my call;
There's dinner for all.
Come in to my treat
Of nice bread and meat
You little ones all,
Come, come at my call!

"Ah!" thought Mook, "this sounds good! I am a little one, so I suppose I am expected!"

He saw many cats and a few dogs running towards the old woman's house, and as he came up two pretty kittens were just entering. "These kitties seem to know the way," thought Mook, "so I will just follow them."

Through the courtyard and up the dark stairway the kittens went, and Mook followed them into a large room where the old woman he had seen at the window stood ready to receive her guests.

"Why!" she cried, when she saw Mook, "what on earth have you come for?"

"Please, madam," said Mook, "just now you invited all the little ones to come to your feast. I, too, am a little one—and oh! so hungry! I thought I might come too."

"Ah, well," said the old dame, "I suppose you must be a stranger in this town, for everyone here knows that I don't cook for anyone but my darling cats, and that sometimes, like to-day, I invite their little playmates from the neighbourhood to dine with them. But since you are so very tired and hungry, you may stay here and feast with my cats."

Mook was very grateful, and the cats' food really was most delicious, better than anything he had ever tasted in his father's house. So, when he had finished his meal and the old woman told him that if he liked he might remain in her service, he gladly accepted the offer.

The work he had to do was not very difficult. It consisted in shaking and airing the satin cushions on which the cats slept, in sweeping out the rooms, and carrying in the meals. Mook was fond of animals and enjoyed his duties. Already he thought he had found his fortune, when a change came. Besides the cats there was also a small dog in the house, for which, however, the old woman did not seem to care at all. But Mook took a great fancy to the little creature, and spent all his spare time in playing with it. Whether the cats resented his preference for doggie, or be it for some other reason, they soon began to be very troublesome—not when the old woman was anywhere near, but when Mook was alone with them in the house. Sometimes they would race about like wild things, overturn dishes and break valuable vases; then, when their mistress returned, they would pretend to be peacefully sleeping in their satin beds, and Mook was blamed for all the ruin. When he tried to explain the old woman refused to listen to him. She would not hear a word against her precious, innocent kitties. So Mook was scolded every day, until he felt that such a life was unbearable and longed to run away. This, however, he did not want to do without having received the wages that had at first been promised him, but which had never been forthcoming; so he stayed on, although matters went from bad to worse.

One morning the old woman had gone out, after scolding Mook soundly and telling him he was to have no dinner that day. He felt very miserable and was about to leave the house in despair, when his little dog friend came up to him and wheedled him so long, pulling at Mook's caftan, that he thought he would follow and see what doggie wanted with him.

He was led to the door of a room he had never before noticed. The door stood ajar, and the dog pulled him into it.

What a queer room it was! Full of all kinds of rubbish and old clothes; near the

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door stood an ebony walking-stick next to a huge pair of slippers.

Suddenly Mook was struck with an idea. Why should he not pay himself the wages he had earned? His own slippers were worn out, and those would do very nicely instead. The stick he would take as a support in walking. So he put on the new slippers, took the stick in his hand, and bade an affectionate farewell to his dog friend, who accompanied him to the door, joyously wagging his tail. Although these slippers were even larger than his former pair, it seemed to Mook that walking was much easier this time, and he went so fast that in a few minutes he had left the town far behind him, and at sunset he was in another country.

He was getting tired now, and wanted to rest awhile; but, do what he would, he could not stop himself. Some strange force in the slippers carried him on and on against his will. This frightened him so that he called out, "Whoa! whoa!" just as he would have done to a horse, and immediately the slippers stood still.

Now that Mook understood their peculiarities he was thoroughly delighted, and he lay down to sleep well content. He dreamt that the little dog was standing beside him.

"Mook," it said, in human speech, "you have always been very kind to me, and that is why I helped you to get those slippers and that walking-stick. You must know that I am not really a dog at all, but a fairy, and that I always reward those who have been good to me in my animal form. One secret of the slippers you've already found out for yourself—that they carry you along at the rate of many miles a minute; but they still possess another property. If you turn round three times on the right heel, and wish yourself at any particular place, you will arrive there at the very moment. The magic of the walking-stick is that it can discover hidden treasure. When you hold this stick in your right hand and pass over a spot where treasure is buried, the stick will tap three times on the ground for gold, and twice for silver. Then, if you dig in that place you will find the treasure."

At this moment Mook woke up and found the sun already high in the heavens. He thought: "I may as well try whether my dream told me true or not." He sprang up and attempted to whirl round on his right heel, but the slippers were so very much too large that this was anything but an easy job. Time after time he fell sprawling, but, being a persevering little mortal, he did not give it up easily, and tried until he succeeded. Three times he span round, crying, "I wish myself in the next town!" And there he stood, in the middle of a large market-place!

People were hurrying hither and thither, and often tripped over Mook's long scimitar. Then they scowled at him, so he sought a quiet street, where he could think over the best way of turning his new possessions to good account.

He decided to go to the palace and offer his services as runner to the King. But when he came there and stated his errand no one would take him seriously. Such a little fellow with such a heavy head, and then to try and make people believe he could run faster than the fastest runner! It was preposterous! Still, as the King's Steward thought his master might be amused by the ridiculous little creature he took Mook with him to the audience chamber.

The King, who was fond of a joke, was hugely delighted with Mook, and promised to let one of his runners race against him that very afternoon. The news spread fast through the town that an amusing spectacle was awaiting everyone who would come to the racecourse behind the palace. Meanwhile, Mook was regaled with good things in the Royal kitchen, so that when the afternoon came he felt quite strong and happy, and did not in the least mind the laughter that greeted his appearance on the racecourse. Innumerable spectators crowded all around the course. The King, with his whole Court and all the Princes and Princesses, was seated in the grand stand, and Mook made such an elaborate bow before His Majesty that laughter broke out afresh. Then his opponent, the very fleetest of the King's runners, took his place beside him; the Princess Amarza, the King's favourite daughter, gave the signal, and away went the competitors.

At first Mook went slowly and let the runner get a good start, but then he began to race in earnest. His slippers scarcely seemed to touch the ground. In a few seconds he had overhauled the runner, then he passed him and reached the goal long before the other had got half-way round the course.

Astonishment had at first kept everyone spellbound, but now the applause burst forth. Victorious Mook was led in triumph before the King, and received the prize from the hands of Princess Amarza. The King was so pleased with Mook that he then and there appointed him his special messenger. He was housed in the palace and took his meals with the highest Court officers. The most secret

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and important messages were entrusted to him, and he accomplished all his journeys with such incredible swiftness that he became prime favourite with His Majesty.

Now, truly, it seemed as if Mook had found his fortune at last; but he was soon to learn the instability of Royal favour. Black envy consumed the hearts of all the other courtiers.

"What! This ridiculous dwarf, who could do nothing but run fast, had ousted them from their master's favour. It could not be tolerated! Some way must be found to get rid of him!"

Mook noticed how little he was liked by his companions, and, as he was a kindhearted little fellow who wished to be friends with everyone, he pondered how he could mend matters. He bethought himself of his magic walking-stick, for he had noticed how eager they all were for money.

"If I can find gold and give it to these people they will be sure to like me!"

So thought Mook, and thereby proved how neglected his education had been, otherwise he would have known that gold does not buy true friendship.

He now always took his stick with him when he went out, and one day, in a distant part of the palace grounds, the stick quivered in his hand and tapped three times on the ground. Mock made some marks on the trees near the spot to help him refind it, and that very night he took a spade and crept noiselessly out of the palace. It was heavy work, this digging, but Mook persevered until he found a stone jar full of gold pieces. Of these he took as many as he could carry and hid them in his room.

The following day he commenced dealing out his riches with a lavish hand, but, far from earning the friendship of those who received it, it only excited their jealousy more and more. They muttered ugly things among themselves about Mook and the way he had come by such large sums of money. They spied upon him continually, and one night they surprised him as he visited his hidden hoard in the garden to replenish his sadly-shrunken purse. They let him get back to his rooms unmolested, but next day the Lord High Treasurer went to the King and openly accused Mook of stealing from the Royal Exchequer. It certainly was true that vast sums had somehow disappeared. The Lord High Treasurer could have told more about that had he chosen, and the King had begun to notice the dwindling of his treasures, too, so it was a godsend to the treasurer to be able to lay all the blame on Mook.

At first the King refused to believe the story, but when his courtiers showed him the buried jar of gold, and when the Lord High Treasurer swore that this was the very sum he missed in the exchequer, the King was convinced, and his wrath against Mook knew no bounds. He was condemned to death, and thrust into the darkest dungeon to await his doom. Moreover, he was so securely chained to the wall that it was impossible for him to turn three times on his right heel and wish himself out of the country.

Mook was young. He did not want to die, so he thought and thought of some way of saving his life. When he had made up his mind, he sent a message to the King, begging to be allowed a few moments in his presence, then if the Monarch promised to spare his life he would reveal to him an important secret. This was conceded. Mook, closely guarded, was brought before His Majesty. He revealed to him the properties of the ebony stick, and said that, far from stealing any treasure, he had just discovered this gold. To see whether his story was true, the Monarch buried some silver in the garden, and then made Mook search for it with his stick. In a very short time the stick tapped twice on the ground, and the King saw that Mook had spoken the truth.

But the crafty Monarch, although now convinced of his innocence, was not content with this one secret. He said, "It is true I promised to spare your life, and so I will, but I shall keep you locked up in the dark dungeon if you don't tell me the secret of your swiftness as well."

What was poor Mook to do? That one night in the cold damp dungeon had been more than enough for him; he did not want to spend his whole life there; so he told the King that the secret of his swiftness lay in the slippers. The King then calmly took possession of stick and slippers, and had them deposited in his treasury; but Mook he exiled from his dominion, saying, "Go at once; and if ever you are caught here again, you shall certainly be put to death."

So Mook was turned out of the palace, and hastened away from the town poorer than ever.

Happily for him the kingdom was not a large one, so in a few hours' time he had got beyond its limits, and as he was thoroughly disgusted with men and their ways, he left the high road and struck out across the country until he came to a beautiful grove of fig trees, through which flowed a placid stream of clear water. As he was very hungry he looked

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up into the fig trees, although scarcely expecting to find any ripe fruit, as it was yet too early in the season for figs. To his surprise and delight, however, he saw the loveliest ripe fruit, of an alluring rose colour, close within reach. He ate plenteously of them, and then went to the stream for a drink of water.

As he bent over the clear waters he started back in horrified amazement at the strange sight that met his gaze. Two long donkey's ears stuck out high above his turban, and together with a thick, long nose were most unwelcome additions to his never very beautiful appearance!

"Well," sighed Mook, "I certainly deserve a pair of donkey's ears for being ass enough to put my trust in kings and courtiers. I never was beautiful, but now I look so absurd that even if I wished I would never dare venture back to the haunts of men."

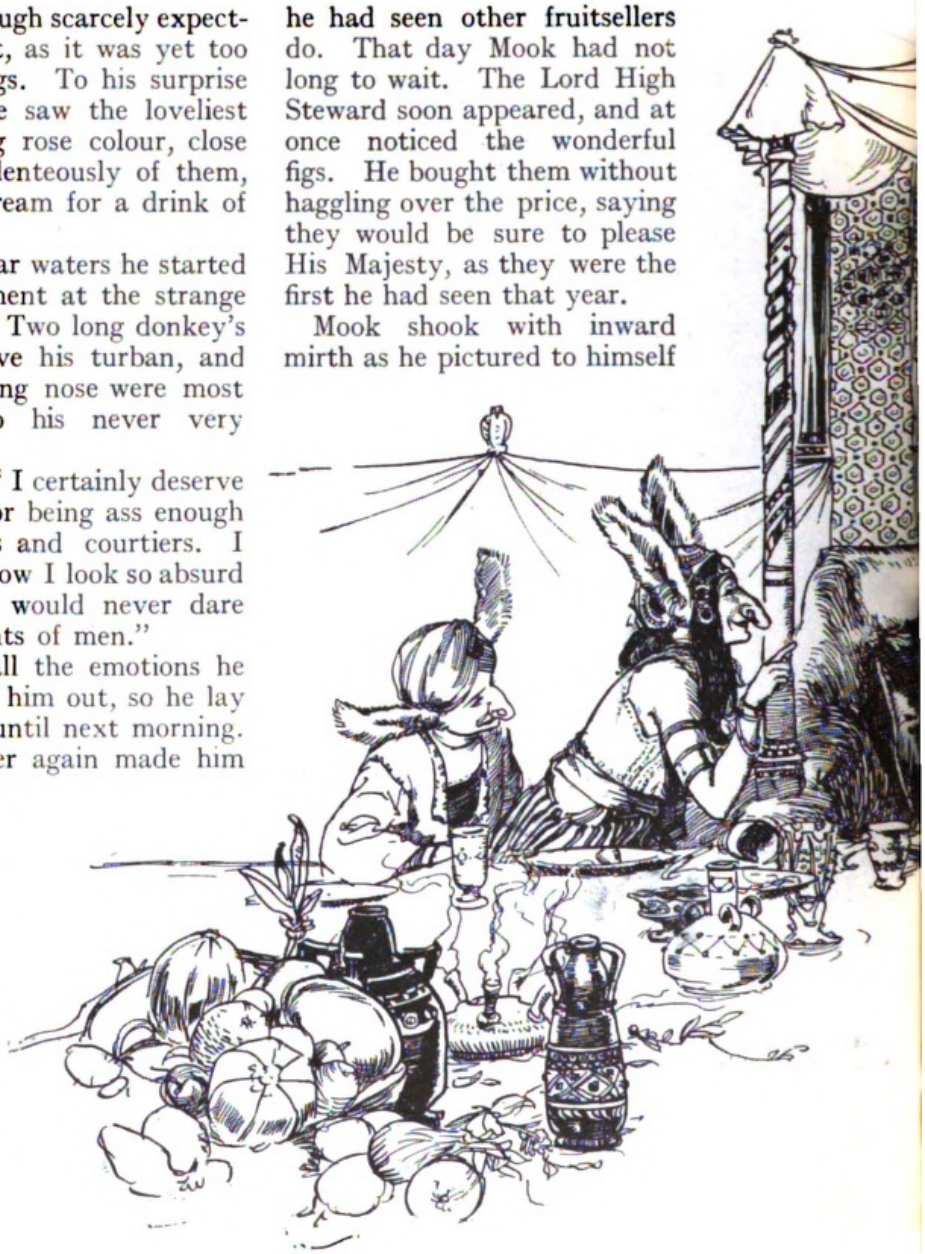
His long tramp and all the emotions he had undergone had tired him out, so he lay down and slept soundly until next morning. Then the pangs of hunger again made him turn to the fig trees. This time he singled out a tree with dark violet fruit, and as these figs tasted even better than those of the previous day, he ate quite a quantity of them. He smiled to himself rather ruefully in anticipation of what he would see when next he looked into the streamlet. His ears must now have become so long, he thought, that they could not possibly be tucked in under his turban. But when he did look into his rustic mirror he was even more surprised than before. Not only were ears and thick, repellent nose gone, but his head was the size of that worn by the usual run of mortals, and, best of all, his stature was of the ordinary size.

Mook was overjoyed. He did not now feel so shy of returning to the inhabited world, and moreover he was struck with a brilliant idea.

He gathered some fig-leaves and a nice quantity of the rose-coloured figs and started for the town from which he had been exiled. You see, he was certain that no one could possibly recognize him now.

Once in the town, he sat himself down under the palace gateway and spread his figs on a bed of leaves on the pavement before him as he had seen other fruitsellers do. That day Mook had not long to wait. The Lord High Steward soon appeared, and at once noticed the wonderful figs. He bought them without haggling over the price, saying they would be sure to please His Majesty, as they were the first he had seen that year.

Mook shook with inward mirth as he pictured to himself



what the King would look like when he had partaken of the dainty, but very wisely he did not stay in the town, but returned to his fig-grove, after having bought, with part of the money received for the figs, an astrologer's gown and outfit and a long white beard of goat's hair.

Meanwhile the Steward had returned to the palace, and at dessert that day he placed a silver dish, with the figs prettily arranged on it, in the middle of the table. There was a shout of delight from the King, and from all the Princes and Princesses.

"This is indeed a pleasant surprise, my Lord Steward!" cried His Majesty, rubbing his hands. "Bring this dish of figs to me at once, and I will divide them."

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"EVERYONE HAD DONKEY'S EARS AND LONG, THICK NOSES!"

This was done, and the King first laid aside a goodly share for himself; then he distributed the rest. The Princes and Princesses got two figs each, and the courtiers each got one. Then the feast began.

Suddenly Princess Amarza looked at the King. "Why, father," she tittered, "how awfully funny you look!"

The King glanced up from devouring his tenth fig. He wanted to reprimand Amarza for her disrespectful utterance, but the words died on his lips as he looked, in the greatest amazement, from one to the other of all those seated at table. Everyone had donkey's ears and long, thick noses! But the ears and noses of the Princes and Princesses were longer than those of the courtiers.

The King put his hands to his head, and there he felt a pair of ears far outreaching those of any of the others. He hurried to his room and looked in the glass. Yes; it was but too true! Two donkey's ears stuck up straight from his head, and his nose was like an elephant's trunk!

Immediately all the doctors of the town were summoned to the palace. They tried this remedy and that, but all to no avail. For many days they doctored the King, the Princes and Princesses, and all the courtiers; but the ears and noses remained as before. One of the Princes even submitted to an operation, but no sooner were the ears cut off than new ones sprouted up again. The King, who hated to be ridiculed, and now felt sure that he and his Court were the laughing-stock of all the people, issued a proclamation promising untold wealth to the man who could rid him of his deformity. This naturally attracted many pretenders, but, needless to say, none of them could accomplish the feat.

Mook now thought the time had come for him to act. So, clad in his astrologer's garb and carrying a covered basket with a few violet-coloured figs, he presented himself at the palace, and, on stating his errand, was conducted to His Majesty's apartments. He could scarcely keep from laughing out loud when he saw how supremely ridiculous the King looked, but he assured the Monarch that he could cure him. At first the King, taught by many disappointments, was not disposed to believe him, but when Princess Amarza offered to try the remedy, and when he saw that as soon as she had eaten the violet fig the astrologer had given her the disfiguring nose and ears disappeared—why, then he took the stranger by the hand and, leading him into his treasury, he promised to give him as much gold and precious stones as he might wish.

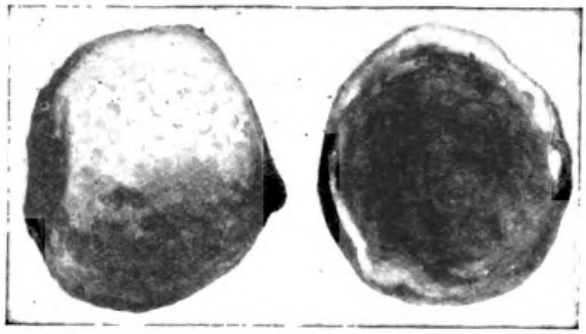
As soon as Mook entered the treasury he saw his slippers and walking-stick at the other end of the room, but he wandered about slowly, pretending to examine the treasures, until he came quite close to his own property. Then, in a flash, he got his feet into his slippers, caught up the stick, and, whirling rapidly round on his right heel, he wished himself back in Bussorah.

Long before the King had recovered from his disgusted surprise Mook was home again in his native town, where his magic stick kept him well supplied with wealth and his magic slippers procured him all the change of scene he might wish for.

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# CURIOSITIES.

*[We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.]*



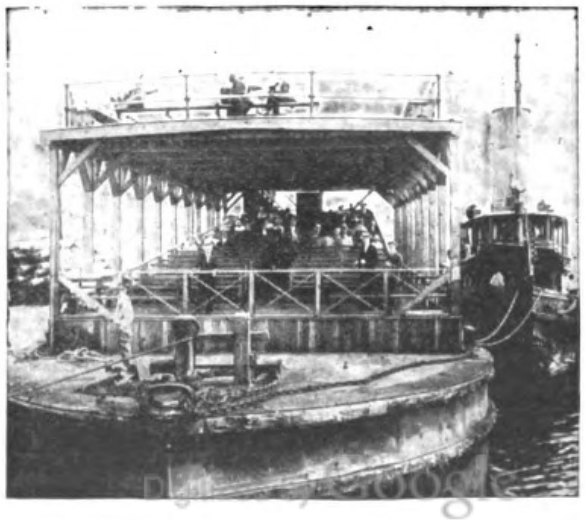
## EFFECT OF LIGHTNING ON GOLF BALL.

A REMARKABLE experience which befell F. Findlay, the Metropolitan Golf Club's professional, while playing over the club's course at Oakleigh, during a thunderstorm, was recently recorded in the *Melbourne Argus*. Findlay was in the act of making an iron shot when a flash of lightning struck his club at the moment of impact with the ball. The shock was severely felt by the player, who stated that it was as though a red-hot iron had been thrust up his arm, and upon reaching the ball he found that half of it had been burnt away.—Mr. Albert H. Lawson, State School, Irrewillipe, Victoria, Australia.

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## TO VIEW THE PANAMA CANAL.

THE greatest sightseeing conveyance in public use is a passenger-carrying barge fitted up to carry sightseers through the Panama Canal. Its foundation is a steel barge, one hundred and fifty-four feet long, thirty-two feet beam, ten feet seven inches in depth, and five hundred gross tons, which was brought to the isthmus in 1909. Like the familiar sightseeing trucks, the seats are arranged in tiers, gradually descending from a height of eight feet nine inches in the rear to two feet at the forward end, and there is standing room for passengers on the roof.—Mr. Frank W. Lane, 1,303½, Waller Street, San Francisco, Cal., U.S.A.



## A "POLTERER'S" BEACH-BARROW.

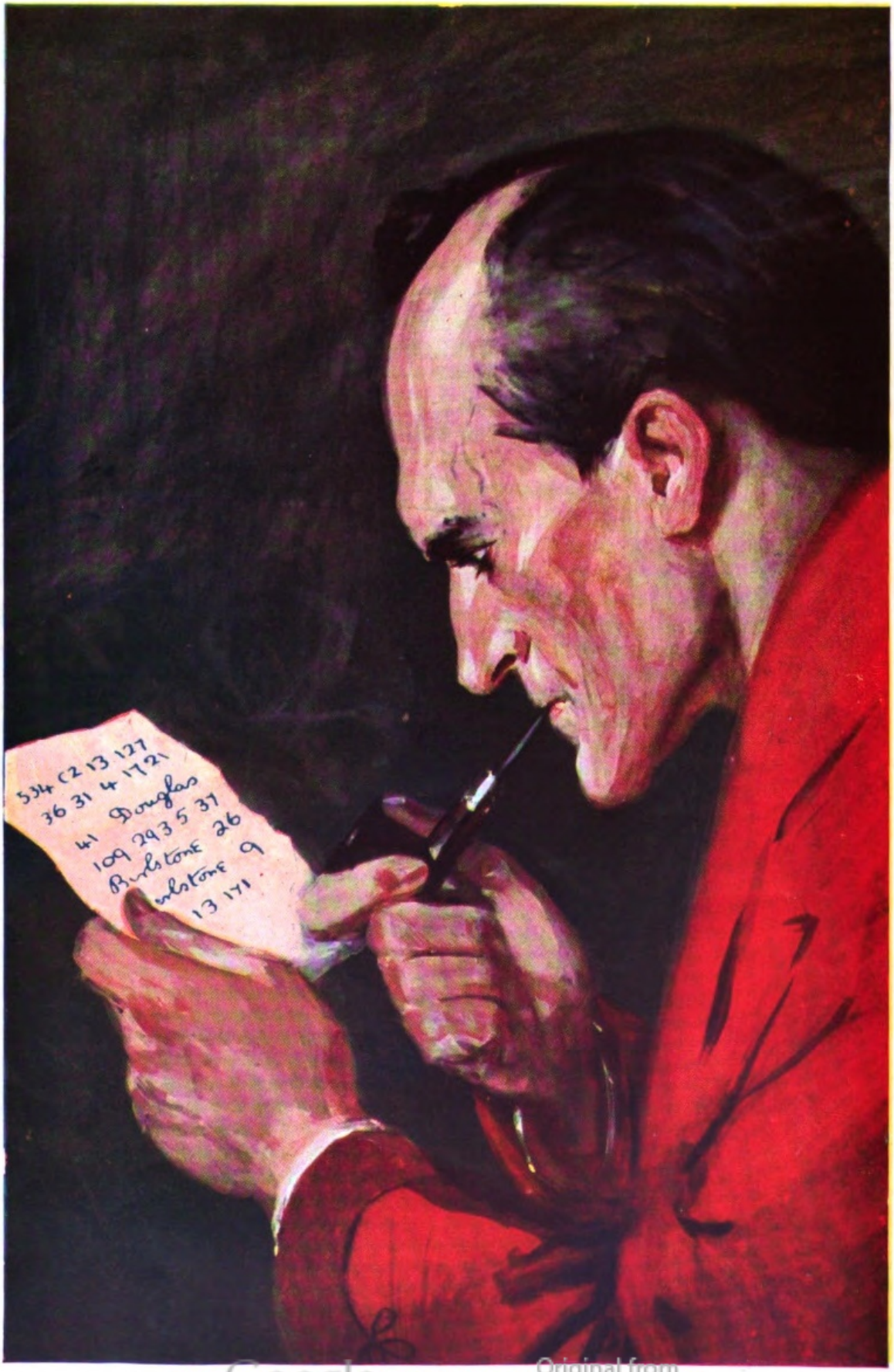
ON our East Coast the villagers are fond of "poltering" (Old French *poltre*, a beam?) — *i.e.*, gathering pieces of drift-wood cast ashore when the east wind is blowing. Theoretically all such wood belongs to a Government official, the "Receiver of Wrecks," and if the wood is large enough, or sound enough, to have any market value, it must be reported to the coastguard, after which the finder can either purchase the wood at a nominal price or receive for "salvage" about one-third of the proceeds of its sale by auction. The bulk of the drift-wood thrown ashore is, however, of no value except for domestic fires, and thrifty villagers keep themselves stocked with fuel by systematic "poltering." Sometimes they carry the wood, as they pick it up, in a sack; sometimes in a wheelbarrow. But an ordinary wheel-barrow sinks in the sand, and so the "polterer" here shown has ingeniously made for his own use a "beach-barrow," the wheel



of which is an old barrel thrown up by the sea, and the axle-bearings are two stout nails driven securely into the top and bottom. The frame of this "beach-barrow" is made of drift-wood, and is covered with a piece of canvas, on which the load is placed. It is thus very light, and, owing to the broad surface of its wheel, it will run quite easily over soft sand or rough shingle. The little boy in the photograph is the "polterer's" grandson, who is about to load the barrow with a derelict wooden buoy, such as are used by the Dutch for floating their fishing-nets. Some years ago, when the coast was strewn with deal planks from the wreck of a timber ship, and everybody made his "pile," this particular "polterer" sent in through the coastguard an offer of fifteen shillings for his collection. This he had calculated at the rate of three halfpence per cubic foot, which is about equal to sixpennyworth of coal. Other people sent in similar offers. But the Receiver of Wrecks insisted on an auction sale, with the result that this lot, for which fifteen shillings had been offered, realized exactly five shillings, after deducting "salvage"! The "polterer" of the photograph has made for himself a new proverb, "It is an ill wind that blows nobody any good."—Mr. H. E. Webb, 7, Scarsdale Villas, Kensington, W.

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**THE CIPHER AND THE MAN WHO SOLVED IT.**

(SEE "THE VALLEY OF FEAR.")

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THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

SEPTEMBER, 1914.
Vol. xlviii. No. 285.

# The VALLEY of FEAR

## A NEW SHERLOCK HOLMES STORY

By

## A. CONAN DOYLE

*Illustrated by* FRANK WILES

PART I.

## THE TRAGEDY OF BIRLSTONE

### CHAPTER I.

#### THE WARNING.



AM inclined to think——" said I.

"I should do so," Sherlock Holmes remarked, impatiently.

I believe that I am one of the most long-suffering of mortals, but I admit that I was annoyed at the sardonic interruption.

"Really, Holmes," said I, severely, "you are a little trying at times."

He was too much absorbed with his own thoughts to give any immediate answer to my remonstrance. He leaned upon his hand, with his untasted breakfast before him, and he stared at the slip of paper which he had just drawn from its envelope. Then he took the envelope itself, held it up to the light, and very carefully studied both the exterior and the flap.

"It is Porlock's writing," said he, thoughtfully. "I can hardly doubt that it is Porlock's writing, though I have only seen it twice before. The Greek 'e' with the peculiar top flourish is distinctive. But if it is from Porlock, then it must be something of the very first importance."

He was speaking to himself rather than to me, but my vexation disappeared in the interest which the words awakened.

"Who, then, is Porlock?" I asked.

"Porlock, Watson, is a *nom de plume*, a mere identification mark, but behind it lies a shifty and evasive personality. In a former


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letter he frankly informed me that the name was not his own, and defied me ever to trace him among the teeming millions of this great city. Porlock is important, not for himself, but for the great man with whom he is in touch. Picture to yourself the pilot-fish with the shark, the jackal with the lion—anything that is insignificant in companionship with what is formidable. Not only formidable, Watson, but sinister—in the highest degree sinister. That is where he comes within my purview. You have heard me speak of Professor Moriarty?"

"The famous scientific criminal, as famous among crooks as——"

"My blushes, Watson," Holmes murmured, in a deprecating voice.

"I was about to say 'as he is unknown to the public.'"

"A touch—a distinct touch!" cried Holmes. "You are developing a certain unexpected vein of pawky humour, Watson, against which I must learn to guard myself. But in calling Moriarty a criminal you are uttering libel in the eyes of the law, and there lies the glory and the wonder of it. The greatest schemer of all time, the organizer of every devilry, the controlling brain of the underworld—a brain which might have made or marred the destiny of nations. That's the man. But so aloof is he from general suspicion—so immune from criticism—so admirable in his management and self-effacement, that for those very words that you have uttered he could hale you to a court and emerge with your year's pension as a solatium for his wounded character. Is he not the celebrated author of 'The Dynamics of an Asteroid'—a book which ascends to such rarefied heights of pure mathematics that it is said that there was no man in the scientific press capable of criticizing it? Is this a man to traduce? Foul-mouthed doctor and slandered professor—such would be your respective *rôles*. That's genius, Watson. But if I am spared by lesser men our day will surely come."

"May I be there to see!" I exclaimed, devoutly. "But you were speaking of this man Porlock."

"Ah, yes—the so-called Porlock is a link in the chain some little way from its great attachment. Porlock is not quite a sound link, between ourselves. He is the only flaw in that chain so far as I have been able to test it."

"But no chain is stronger than its weakest link."

"Exactly, my dear Watson. Hence the extreme importance of Porlock. Led on by some rudimentary aspirations towards right, and encouraged by the judicious stimulation of an occasional ten-pound note sent to him by devious methods, he has once or twice given me advance information which has been of value—that highest value which anticipates and prevents rather than avenges crime. I cannot doubt that if we had the cipher we should find that this communication is of the nature that I indicate."

Again Holmes flattened out the paper upon his unused plate. I rose and, leaning over him, stared down at the curious inscription, which ran as follows:—

534 C2 13 127 36 31 4 17 21 41
DOUGLAS 109 293 5 37 BIRLSTONE
26 BIRLSTONE 9 13 171

"What do you make of it, Holmes?"

"It is obviously an attempt to convey secret information."

"But what is the use of a cipher message without the cipher?"

"In this instance, none at all."

"Why do you say 'in this instance'?"

"Because there are many ciphers which I would read as easily as I do the apocrypha of the agony column. Such crude devices amuse the intelligence without fatiguing it. But this is different. It is clearly a reference to the words in a page of some book. Until I am told which page and which book I am powerless."

"But why 'Douglas' and 'Birlstone'?"

"Clearly because those are words which were not contained in the page in question."

"Then why has he not indicated the book?"

"Your native shrewdness, my dear Watson, that innate cunning which is the delight of your friends, would surely prevent you from enclosing cipher and message in the same envelope. Should it miscarry you are undone. As it is, both have to go wrong before any harm comes from it. Our second post is now overdue, and I shall be surprised if it does not bring us either a further letter of explanation or, as is more probable, the very volume to which these figures refer."

Holmes's calculation was fulfilled within a very few minutes by the appearance of Billy, the page, with the very letter which we were expecting.

"The same writing," remarked Holmes, as he opened the envelope, "and actually signed," he added, in an exultant voice, as

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he unfolded the epistle. "Come, we are getting on, Watson."

His brow clouded, however, as he glanced over the contents.

"Dear me, this is very disappointing! I fear, Watson, that all our expectations come to nothing. I trust that the man Porlock will come to no harm.

"'Dear Mr. Holmes,' he says, 'I will go no further in this matter. It is too dangerous. He suspects me. I can see that he suspects me. He came to me quite unexpectedly after I had actually addressed this envelope with the intention of sending you the key to the cipher. I was able to cover it up. If he had seen it, it would have gone hard with me. But I read suspicion in his eyes. Please burn the cipher message, which can now be of no use to you.—FRED PORLOCK.'"

Holmes sat for some little time twisting this letter between his fingers, and frowning, as he stared into the fire.

"After all," he said at last, "there may be nothing in it. It may be only his guilty conscience. Knowing himself to be a traitor, he may have read the accusation in the other's eyes."

"The other being, I presume, Professor Moriarty?"

"No less. When any of that party talk about 'he,' you know whom they mean. There is one predominant 'he' for all of them."

"But what can he do?"

"Hum! That's a large question. When you have one of the first brains of Europe up against you and all the powers of darkness at his back, there are infinite possibilities. Anyhow, friend Porlock is evidently scared out of his senses. Kindly compare the writing in the note with that upon its envelope, which was done, he tells us, before this ill-omened visit. The one is clear and firm; the other hardly legible."

"Why did he write at all? Why did he not simply drop it?"

"Because he feared I would make some inquiry after him in that case, and possibly bring trouble on him."

"No doubt," said I. "Of course"—I had picked up the original cipher message and was bending my brows over it—"it's pretty maddening to think that an important secret may lie here on this slip of paper, and that it is beyond human power to penetrate it."

Sherlock Holmes had pushed away his untasted breakfast and lit the unsavoury pipe which was the companion of his deepest meditations.

"I wonder!" said he, leaning back and staring at the ceiling. "Perhaps there are points which have escaped your Machiavellian intellect. Let us consider the problem in the light of pure reason. This man's reference is to a book. That is our point of departure."

"A somewhat vague one."

"Let us see, then, if we can narrow it down. As I focus my mind upon it, it seems rather less impenetrable. What indications have we as to this book?"

"None."

"Well, well, it is surely not quite so bad as that. The cipher message begins with a large 534, does it not? We may take it as a working hypothesis that 534 is the particular page to which the cipher refers. So our book has already become a *large* book, which is surely something gained. What other indications have we as to the nature of this large book? The next sign is C2. What do you make of that, Watson?"

"Chapter the second, no doubt."

"Hardly that, Watson. You will, I am sure, agree with me that if the page be given the number of the chapter is immaterial. Also that if page 534 only finds us in the second chapter, the length of the first one must have been really intolerable."

"Column!" I cried.

"Brilliant, Watson. You are scintillating this morning. If it is not column, then I am very much deceived. So now, you see, we begin to visualize a large book, printed in double columns, which are each of a considerable length, since one of the words is numbered in the document as the two hundred and ninety-third. Have we reached the limits of what reason can supply?"

"I fear that we have."

"Surely you do yourself an injustice. One more coruscation, my dear Watson. Yet another brain-wave. Had the volume been an unusual one he would have sent it to me. Instead of that he had intended, before his plans were nipped, to send me the clue in this envelope. He says so in his note. This would seem to indicate that the book is one which he thought that I would have no difficulty in finding for myself. He had it, and he imagined that I would have it too. In short, Watson, it is a very common book."

"What you say certainly sounds plausible."

"So we have contracted our field of search to a large book, printed in double columns and in common use."

"The Bible!" I cried, triumphantly.

"Good, Watson, good! But not, if I may

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"HOLMES'S EYES WERE GLEAMING WITH EXCITEMENT, AND HIS THIN, NERVOUS FINGERS TWITCHED AS HE COUNTED THE WORDS—'DANGER.' 'HA! HA! CAPITAL! PUT THAT DOWN, WATSON.'"

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say so, quite good enough. Even if I accepted the compliment for myself, I could hardly name any volume which would be less likely to lie at the elbow of one of Moriarty's associates. Besides, the editions of Holy Writ are so numerous that he could hardly suppose that two copies would have the same pagination. This is clearly a book which is standardized. He knows for certain that his page 534 will exactly agree with my page 534."

"But very few books would correspond with that."

"Exactly. Therein lies our salvation. Our search is narrowed down to standardized books which anyone may be supposed to possess."

"'Bradshaw'!"

"There are difficulties, Watson. The vocabulary of 'Bradshaw' is nervous and terse, but limited. The selection of words would hardly lend itself to the sending of general messages. We will eliminate 'Bradshaw.' The dictionary is, I fear, inadmissible for the same reason. What, then, is left?"

"An almanack."

"Excellent, Watson! I am very much mistaken if you have not touched the spot. An almanack! Let us consider the claims of 'Whitaker's Almanack.' It is in common use. It has the requisite number of pages. It is in double column. Though reserved in its earlier vocabulary, it becomes, if I remember right, quite garrulous towards the end." He picked the volume from his desk. "Here is page 534, column two, a substantial block of print dealing, I perceive, with the trade and resources of British India. Jot down the words, Watson. Number thirteen is 'Mahratta.' Not, I fear, a very auspicious beginning. Number one hundred and twenty-seven is 'Government,' which at least makes sense, though somewhat irrelevant to ourselves and Professor Moriarty. Now let us try again. What does the Mahratta Government do? Alas! the next word is 'pigs'-bristles.' We are undone, my good Watson! It is finished."

He had spoken in jesting vein, but the twitching of his bushy eyebrows bespoke his disappointment and irritation. I sat helpless and unhappy, staring into the fire. A long silence was broken by a sudden exclamation from Holmes, who dashed at a cupboard, from which he emerged with a second yellow-covered volume in his hand.

"We pay the price, Watson, for being too up-to-date," he cried. "We are before our time, and suffer the usual penalties. Being the seventh of January, we have very properly laid in the new almanack. It is more than likely that Porlock took his message from the old one. No doubt he would have told us so had his letter of explanation been written. Now let us see what page 534 has in store for us. Number thirteen is 'There,' which is much more promising. Number one hundred and twenty-seven is 'is'—'There is'"—Holmes's eyes were gleaming with excitement, and his thin, nervous fingers twitched as he counted the words—"'danger.' Ha! ha! Capital! Put that down, Watson. 'There is danger—may—come—very—soon—one.' Then we have the name 'Douglas'—'rich—country—now—at—Birlstone—House—Birlstone—confidence—is—pressing.' There, Watson! what do you think of pure reason and its fruits? If the greengrocer had such a thing as a laurel-wreath I should send Billy round for it."

I was staring at the strange message which I had scrawled, as he deciphered it, upon a sheet of foolscap on my knee.

"What a queer, scrambling way of expressing his meaning!" said I.

"On the contrary, he has done quite remarkably well," said Holmes. "When you search a single column for words with which to express your meaning, you can hardly expect to get everything you want. You are bound to leave something to the intelligence of your correspondent. The purport is perfectly clear. Some devilry is intended against one Douglas, whoever he may be, residing as stated, a rich country gentleman. He is sure—'confidence' was as near as he could get to 'confident'—that it is pressing. There is our result, and a very workmanlike little bit of analysis it was."

Holmes had the impersonal joy of the true artist in his better work, even as he mourned darkly when it fell below the high level to which he aspired. He was still chuckling over his success when Billy swung open the door and Inspector MacDonald of Scotland Yard was ushered into the room.

Those were the early days at the end of the 'eighties, when Alec MacDonald was far from having attained the national fame which he has now achieved. He was a young but trusted member of the detective force, who had distinguished himself in several cases which had been entrusted to him. His tall, bony figure gave promise of exceptional physical strength, while his great cranium and deep-set, lustrous eyes spoke no less clearly of the keen intelligence which twinkled out from behind his bushy eyebrows. He

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"THE INSPECTOR WAS STARING WITH A LOOK OF ABSOLUTE AMAZEMENT AT A PAPER UPON THE

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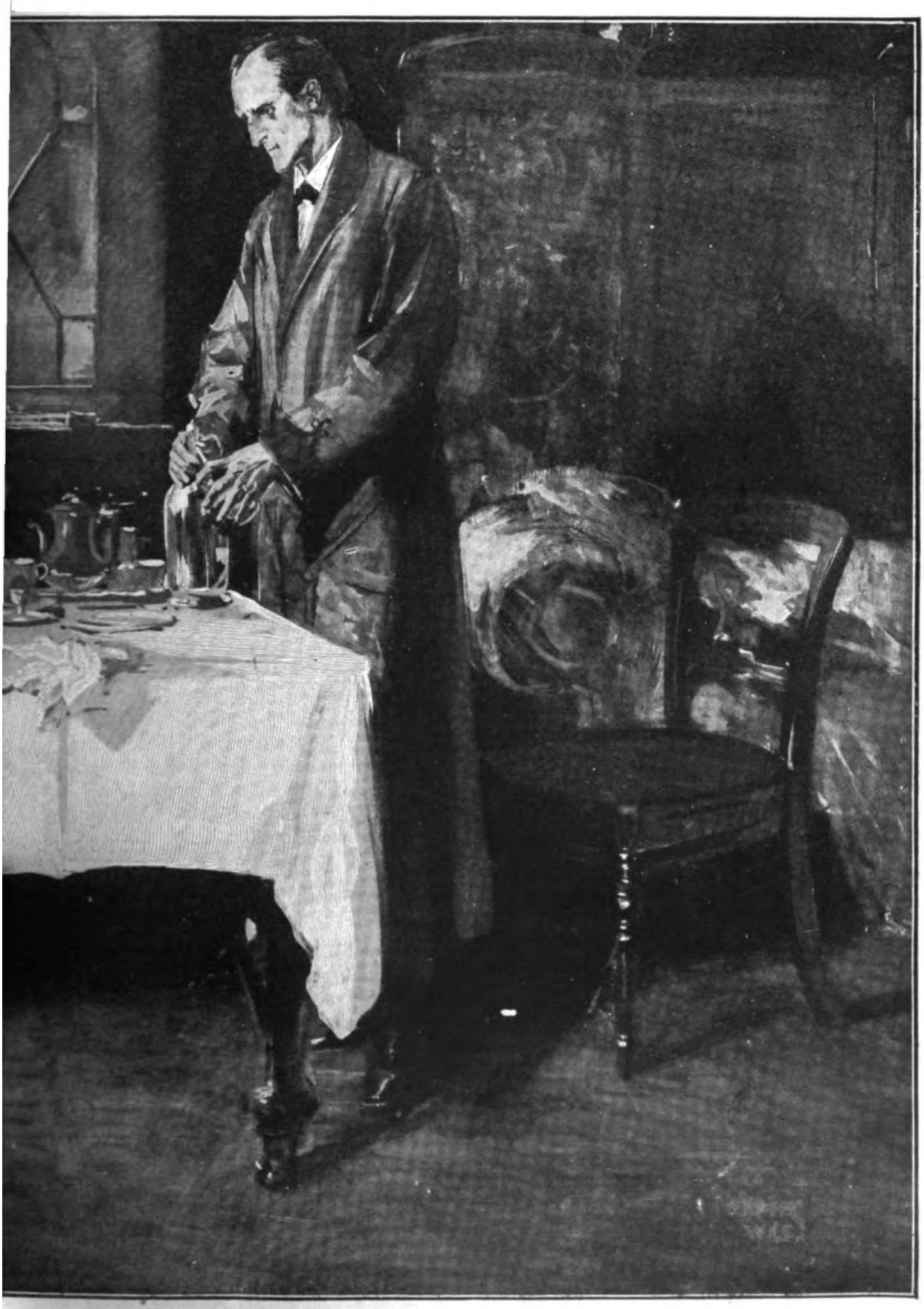


TABLE.—IT WAS THE SHEET UPON WHICH I HAD SCRAWLED THE ENIGMATIC MESSAGE."

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was a silent, precise man, with a dour nature and a hard Aberdonian accent. Twice already in his career had Holmes helped him to attain success, his own sole reward being the intellectual joy of the problem. For this reason the affection and respect of the Scotchman for his amateur colleague were profound, and he showed them by the frankness with which he consulted Holmes in every difficulty. Mediocrity knows nothing higher than itself, but talent instantly recognizes genius, and MacDonald had talent enough for his profession to enable him to perceive that there was no humiliation in seeking the assistance of one who already stood alone in Europe, both in his gifts and in his experience. Holmes was not prone to friendship, but he was tolerant of the big Scotchman, and smiled at the sight of him.

"You are an early bird, Mr. Mac," said he. "I wish you luck with your worm. I fear this means that there is some mischief afoot."

"If you said 'hope' instead of 'fear' it would be nearer the truth, I'm thinking, Mr. Holmes," the inspector answered, with a knowing grin. "Well, maybe a wee nip would keep out the raw morning chill. No, I won't smoke, I thank you. I'll have to be pushing on my way, for the early hours of a case are the precious ones, as no man knows better than your own self. But—but——"

The inspector had stopped suddenly, and was staring with a look of absolute amazement at a paper upon the table. It was the sheet upon which I had scrawled the enigmatic message.

"Douglas!" he stammered. "Birlstone! What's this, Mr. Holmes? Man, it's witchcraft! Where in the name of all that is wonderful did you get those names?"

"It is a cipher that Dr. Watson and I have had occasion to solve. But why—what's amiss with the names?"

The inspector looked from one to the other of us in dazed astonishment.

"Just this," said he, "that Mr. Douglas, of Birlstone Manor House, was horribly murdered this morning."

## CHAPTER II.

### MR. SHERLOCK HOLMES DISCOURSES.

It was one of those dramatic moments for which my friend existed. It would be an over-statement to say that he was shocked or even excited by the amazing announcement. Without having a tinge of cruelty in his singular composition, he was undoubtedly callous from long over-stimulation. Yet, if his emotions were dulled, his intellectual perceptions were exceedingly active. There was no trace then of the horror which I had myself felt at this curt declaration, but his face showed rather the quiet and interested composure of the chemist who sees the crystals falling into position from his over-saturated solution.

"Remarkable!" said he; "remarkable!"

"You don't seem surprised."

"Interested, Mr. Mac, but hardly surprised. Why should I be surprised? I receive an anonymous communication from a quarter which I know to be important, warning me that danger threatens a certain person. Within an hour I learn that this danger has actually materialized, and that the person is dead. I am interested, but, as you observe, I am not surprised."

In a few short sentences he explained to the inspector the facts about the letter and the cipher. MacDonald sat with his chin on his hands, and his great sandy eyebrows bunched into a yellow tangle.

"I was going down to Birlstone this morning," said he. "I had come to ask you if you cared to come with me—you and your friend here. But from what you say we might perhaps be doing better work in London."

"I rather think not," said Holmes.

"Hang it all, Mr. Holmes!" cried the inspector. "The papers will be full of the Birlstone Mystery in a day or two, but where's the mystery if there is a man in London who prophesied the crime before ever it occurred? We have only to lay our hands on that man and the rest will follow."

"No doubt, Mr. Mac. But how did you propose to lay your hands on the so-called Porlock?"

MacDonald turned over the letter which Holmes had handed him.

"Posted in Camberwell—that doesn't help us much. Name, you say, is assumed. Not much to go on, certainly. Didn't you say that you have sent him money?"

"Twice."

"And how?"

"In notes to Camberwell post-office."

"Did you never trouble to see who called for them?'

"No."

The inspector looked surprised and a little shocked.

"Why not?"

"Because I always keep faith. I had promised when he first wrote that I would not try to trace him."

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"You think there is someone behind him?"

"I *know* there is."

"This Professor that I have heard you mention?"

"Exactly."

Inspector MacDonald smiled, and his eyelid quivered as he glanced towards me.

"I won't conceal from you, Mr. Holmes, that we think in the C.I.D. that you have a wee bit of a bee in your bonnet over this Professor. I made some inquiries myself about the matter. He seems to be a very respectable, learned, and talented sort of man."

"I'm glad you've got as far as to recognize the talent."

"Man, you can't but recognize it. After I heard your view, I made it my business to see him. I had a chat with him on eclipses—how the talk got that way I canna think—but he had out a reflector lantern and a globe and made it all clear in a minute. He lent me a book, but I don't mind saying that it was a bit above my head, though I had a good Aberdeen upbringing. He'd have made a grand meenister, with his thin face and grey hair and solemn-like way of talking. When he put his hand on my shoulder as we were parting, it was like a father's blessing before you go out into the cold, cruel world."

Holmes chuckled and rubbed his hands.

"Great!" he said; "great! Tell me, friend MacDonald; this pleasing and touching interview was, I suppose, in the Professor's study?"

"That's so."

"A fine room, is it not?"

"Very fine—very handsome indeed, Mr. Holmes."

"You sat in front of his writing-desk?"

"Just so."

"Sun in your eyes and his face in the shadow?"

"Well, it was evening, but I mind that the lamp was turned on my face."

"It would be. Did you happen to observe a picture over the Professor's head?"

"I don't miss much, Mr. Holmes. Maybe I learned that from you. Yes, I saw the picture—a young woman with her head on her hands, keeking at you sideways."

"That painting was by Jean Baptiste Greuze."

The inspector endeavoured to look interested.

"Jean Baptiste Greuze," Holmes continued, joining his finger-tips and leaning well back in his chair, "was a French artist who flourished between the years 1750 and 1800. I allude, of course, to his working career. Modern criticism has more than endorsed the high opinion formed of him by his contemporaries."

The inspector's eyes grew abstracted.

"Hadn't we better——" he said.

"We are doing so," Holmes interrupted. "All that I am saying has a very direct and vital bearing upon what you have called the Birlstone Mystery. In fact, it may in a sense be called the very centre of it."

MacDonald smiled feebly, and looked appealingly to me.

"Your thoughts move a bit too quick for me, Mr. Holmes. You leave out a link or two, and I can't get over the gap. What in the whole wide world can be the connection between this dead painting man and the affair at Birlstone?"

"All knowledge comes useful to the detective," remarked Holmes. "Even the trivial fact that in the year 1865 a picture by Greuze, entitled 'La Jeune Fille à l'agneau,' fetched one million two hundred thousand francs—more than forty thousand pounds—at the Portalis sale, may start a train of reflection in your mind."

It was clear that it did. The inspector looked honestly interested.

"I may remind you," Holmes continued, "that the Professor's salary can be ascertained in several trustworthy books of reference. It is seven hundred a year."

"Then how could he buy——"

"Quite so. How could he?"

"Aye, that's remarkable," said the inspector, thoughtfully. "Talk away, Mr. Holmes. I'm just loving it. It's fine."

Holmes smiled. He was always warmed by genuine admiration—the characteristic of the real artist.

"What about Birlstone?" he asked.

"We've time yet," said the inspector, glancing at his watch. "I've a cab at the door, and it won't take us twenty minutes to Victoria. But about this picture—I thought you told me once, Mr. Holmes, that you had never met Professor Moriarty."

"No, I never have."

"Then how do you know about his rooms?"

"Ah, that's another matter. I have been three times in his rooms, twice waiting for him under different pretexts and leaving before he came. Once—well, I can hardly tell about the once to an official detective. It was on the last occasion that I took the liberty of running over his papers, with the most unexpected results."



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"You found something compromising?"

"Absolutely nothing. That was what amazed me. However, you have now seen the point of the picture. It shows him to be a very wealthy man. How did he acquire wealth? He is unmarried. His younger brother is a station-master in the West of England. His chair is worth seven hundred a year. And he owns a Greuze."

"Well?"

"Surely the inference is plain."

"You mean that he has a great income, and that he must earn it in an illegal fashion?"

"Exactly. Of course, I have other reasons for thinking so—dozens of exiguous threads which lead vaguely up towards the centre of the web where the poisonous motionless creature is lurking. I only mention the Greuze because it brings the matter within the range of your own observation."

"Well, Mr. Holmes, I admit that what you say is interesting. It's more than interesting—it's just wonderful. But let us have it a little clearer if you can. Is it forgery, coining, burglary? Where does the money come from?"

"Have you ever read of Jonathan Wild?"

"Well, the name has a familiar sound. Someone in a novel, was he not? I don't take much stock of detectives in novels—chaps that do things and never let you see how they do them. That's just inspiration, not business."

"Jonathan Wild wasn't a detective, and he wasn't in a novel. He was a master criminal, and he lived last century—1750 or thereabouts."

"Then he's no use to me. I'm a practical man."

"Mr. Mac, the most practical thing that ever you did in your life would be to shut yourself up for three months and read twelve hours a day at the annals of crime. Everything comes in circles, even Professor Moriarty. Jonathan Wild was the hidden force of the London criminals, to whom he sold his brains and his organization on a fifteen per cent. commission. The old wheel turns and the same spoke comes up. It's all been done before and will be again. I'll tell you one or two things about Moriarty which may interest you."

"You'll interest me right enough."

"I happen to know who is the first link in his chain—a chain with this Napoleon-gone-wrong at one end and a hundred broken fighting men, pickpockets, blackmailers, and card-sharpers at the other, with every sort of crime in between. His chief of the staff is Colonel Sebastian Moran, as aloof and guarded and inaccessible to the law as himself. What do you think he pays him?"

"I'd like to hear."

"Six thousand a year. That's paying for brains, you see—the American business principle. I learned that detail quite by chance. It's more than the Prime Minister gets. That gives you an idea of Moriarty's gains and of the scale on which he works. Another point. I made it my business to hunt down some of Moriarty's cheques lately—just common innocent cheques that he pays his household bills with. They were drawn on six different banks. Does that make any impression on your mind?"

"Queer, certainly. But what do you gather from it?"

"That he wanted no gossip about his wealth. No single man should know what he had. I have no doubt that he has twenty banking accounts—the bulk of his fortune abroad in the Deutsche Bank or the Crédit Lyonnais as likely as not. Some time when you have a year or two to spare I commend to you the study of Professor Moriarty."

Inspector MacDonald had grown steadily more impressed as the conversation proceeded. He had lost himself in his interest. Now his practical Scotch intelligence brought him back with a snap to the matter in hand.

"He can keep, anyhow," said he. "You've got us side-tracked with your interesting anecdotes, Mr. Holmes. What really counts is your remark that there is some connection between the Professor and the crime. That you get from the warning received through the man Porlock. Can we for our present practical needs get any farther than that?"

"We may form some conception as to the motives of the crime. It is, as I gather from your original remarks, an inexplicable, or at least an unexplained, murder. Now, presuming that the source of the crime is as we suspect it to be, there might be two different motives. In the first place, I may tell you that Moriarty rules with a rod of iron over his people. His discipline is tremendous. There is only one punishment in his code. It is death. Now, we might suppose that this murdered man—this Douglas, whose approaching fate was known by one of the arch-criminal's subordinates—had in some way betrayed the chief. His punishment followed and would be known to all, if only to put the fear of death into them."

"Well, that is one suggestion, Mr. Holmes."

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"LEANING FORWARD IN THE CAB, HOLMES LISTENED INTENTLY TO MACDONALD'S SHORT SKETCH OF THE PROBLEM WHICH AWAITED US IN SUSSEX."

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"The other is that it has been engineered by Moriarty in the ordinary course of business. Was there any robbery?"

"I have not heard."

"If so it would, of course, be against the first hypothesis and in favour of the second. Moriarty may have been engaged to engineer it on a promise of part spoils, or he may have been paid so much down to manage it. Either is possible. But, whichever it may be, or if it is some third combination, it is down at Birlstone that we must seek the solution. I know our man too well to suppose that he has left anything up here which may lead us to him."

"Then to Birlstone we must go!" cried MacDonald, jumping from his chair. "My word! it's later than I thought. I can give you gentlemen five minutes for preparation, and that is all."

"And ample for us both," said Holmes, as he sprang up and hastened to change from his dressing-gown to his coat. "While we are on our way, Mr. Mac, I will ask you to be good enough to tell me all about it."

"All about it" proved to be disappointingly little, and yet there was enough to assure us that the case before us might well be worthy of the expert's closest attention. He brightened and rubbed his thin hands together as he listened to the meagre but remarkable details. A long series of sterile weeks lay behind us, and here, at last, there was a fitting object for those remarkable powers which, like all special gifts, become irksome to their owner when they are not in use. That razor brain blunted and rusted with inaction. Sherlock Holmes's eyes glistened, his pale cheeks took a warmer hue, and his whole eager face shone with an inward light when the call for work reached him. Leaning forward in the cab, he listened intently to MacDonald's short sketch of the problem which awaited us in Sussex. The inspector was himself dependent, as he explained to us, upon a scribbled account forwarded to him by the milk train in the early hours of the morning. White Mason, the local officer, was a personal friend, and hence MacDonald had been notified very much more promptly than is usual at Scotland Yard when provincials need their assistance. It is a very cold scent upon which the Metropolitan expert is generally asked to run.

"Dear Inspector MacDonald," said the letter which he read to us, "official requisition for your services is in separate envelope. This is for your private eye. Wire me what train in the morning you can get for Birlstone, and I will meet it—or have it met if I am too occupied. This case is a snorter. Don't waste a moment in getting started. If you can bring Mr. Holmes, please do so, for he will find something after his own heart. You would think the whole thing had been fixed up for theatrical effect, if there wasn't a dead man in the middle of it. My word, it *is* a snorter!"

"Your friend seems to be no fool," remarked Holmes.

"No, sir; White Mason is a very live man, if I am any judge."

"Well, have you anything more?"

"Only that he will give us every detail when we meet."

"Then how did you get at Mr. Douglas and the fact that he had been horribly murdered?"

"That was in the enclosed official report. It didn't say 'horrible.' That's not a recognized official term. It gave the name John Douglas. It mentioned that his injuries had been in the head, from the discharge of a shotgun. It also mentioned the hour of the alarm, which was close on to midnight last night. It added that the case was undoubtedly one of murder, but that no arrest had been made, and that the case was one which presented some very perplexing and extraordinary features. That's absolutely all we have at present, Mr. Holmes."

"Then, with your permission, we will leave it at that, Mr. Mac. The temptation to form premature theories upon insufficient data is the bane of our profession. I can only see two things for certain at present: a great brain in London and a dead man in Sussex. It's the chain between that we are going to trace."

*(To be continued.)*

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# "MY REMINISCENCES."

## SOME ADVENTURES, VIEWS, AND EXPERIENCES OF A PIONEER OF ADVERTISERS.

### By the Late THOMAS J. BARRATT.

### Illustrated by A. Gilbert.

THE late Mr. Thomas J. Barratt, for over forty years the head of the house of A. and F. Pears, and probably the best-known advertising man of his time, was often urged to write his autobiography, and harboured the intention for a time, but his life was far too busy to admit of the idea being carried out. The title of the book was to be "How I Spent Three Millions in Advertising," and it is much to be regretted that Mr. Barratt did not live to enjoy the leisure necessary for completing such a work, which would assuredly have been both entertaining and instructive. He also promised to contribute a paper of autobiography to this Magazine, but this project also was not finally completed at the time of his death.



THE LATE MR. THOMAS J. BARRATT.
*Photo. by W. & D. Downey.*

Many notes were made and collected from time to time, however, and a good deal was actually written—more still was dictated—but what exists is rather in the shape of disjointed episodes, expressions of opinion on advertising in its various aspects, views concerning business methods, and so forth, than adapted for consecutive handling as part of a story. The following extracts will, at all events, serve to show what a many-sided man Mr. Barratt was, what a large and keen outlook he had upon life, what he thought about certain business problems, and with what tenacity he held to his convictions, which were immutable. As nearly as possible, what follows is set down in Mr. Barratt's own words.

#### Tottenham Court Road in the "Roaring Forties."

I was born, as was my father before me, in a house that stood on a site which is to-day very many times more than covered by Messrs. Maple and Co.'s furniture shops, at the top of Tottenham Court Road. My earliest recollections of the neighbourhood are of houses with ample gardens and open fields stretching away beyond in the direction of Hampstead. It was a semi-rural residential district, though even in those days there were premonitory indications of a future furniture-dealing settlement.

#### Schools and Schools.

My first school was in Camden Town; my last the school of experience, in which I matriculated early and never ceased to learn. I am learning now; my masters are the public, and even in my veteran days they occasionally accord me honourable mention. What I picked up in the way of scholarship at that Camden Town academy I forget; just the rudiments and a little more, I suppose. Some of my schoolmates I can recall with a good deal of pleasure. Some have risen to eminence, some have long been associated with me in business; the rest are scattered and gone.

One little incident of the Camden Town school is worth mentioning. There was one boy who showed a real genius for drawing, and I struck up a close friendship with him. His name was Matt Morgan, in later years to become famous as an artist in black and white and the editor of that most daring of satirical

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journals, *The Tomahawk*. He was fond of drawing caricatures of the boys he didn't like, and one day he showed me one of the master himself, whom he disliked most of all. It was irresistibly funny, and we were laughing over it behind our desk when the master suddenly pounced upon us, knocked our heads violently together, and confiscated the drawing. Thus was art knocked into me at an early age, and the taste has remained with me ever since, though, unfortunately—or fortunately, as one may be disposed to think—taste did not carry with it the executive capacity.

### Starting-Points.

My own starting-point was not exactly at the bottom; still, it was not high enough up to make me feel giddy. And for that I have always been thankful, for the worst of all starting-points are those right away up, to which you have been lifted without having had the experience of the actual climb for yourself. On my school-days coming to an end, in my fifteenth year, I entered a merchant's office, proud as Lucifer on the magnificent salary of four shillings a week; and this was all I received until later on, when I became indentured as a clerk. Fancy being indentured as a clerk in these days!

I did not do much climbing during that part of my career. It was all dead level, without joy or hope or prospect; and when one day my principal came to me and said, "Thomas, I think you know too much," I quite agreed that I knew more than was necessary for his business, and began to look around for stepping-stones, presently finding myself installed in the office of Messrs. Ellis and Hales, general merchants—so general, in fact, that they carried almost every article of merchandise that could be thought of, with one exception. That exception, curious to say, was soap. Here I acquired a wider experience and a bigger salary; but the climbing was not yet. It was more dead level; everything cut and dried and done to order; no responsibilities worthy the name. Of course I got to know a lot about commodities of one kind and another, but I still failed to get hold of the right end of the business stick, and I began to grow impatient. Then, as luck would have it, I heard of an opening in connection with soap—Pears' soap. I took that opening, plunged into it eagerly, and there I found a real starting-point, for the business was one that was just then in need of a climber. It was in the position of the Duke of York's men when they were half-way up—that is, "neither up nor down." It proved to be my opportunity.

### "He Had His Fears."

The Pears business, which dated from 1789, was then in the hands of Mr. Francis Pears, grandson of the founder of the undertaking. The soapworks were at Isleworth; the office and headquarters at a small shop in Great Russell Street, near the British Museum. I was installed in the shop to assist in the business generally, and kept the books, handled the correspondence, attended to calling customers, and on certain days travelled from town to town effecting sales. Here at last I found something worth doing. Here was a business with possibilities. Up to that time old-fashioned methods had prevailed, and there had been little or no attempt to get into the quickening current of the time. I was eager to alter all this. Convinced as I was that what we had to offer was a good, honest article, deserving of any popularity that effort, energy, and publicity could obtain for it, I conceived the idea of a bold scheme of advertising it; but how was I to inspire the proprietor with the faith that was in myself? That was the difficulty. But I was patient and tactful, and won the confidence of Mr. Pears so far as to induce him to concede that my intentions were admirable and my energies undoubted, but when it came to "counting the cost" it was a different matter. He had his fears.

Little by little, however, I prevailed upon him to venture more than the fifty pounds or sixty pounds a year—never more than eighty pounds—which had previously sufficed him for publicity. Sometimes my advertising suggestions were acted upon; often they were not. Mr. Pears confessed his inability to follow my ideas; he could not see how we were even to get our money back, much less to make more by it. He was a grand old man in a grand old way, but could not be made to understand the art of advertising. "You may be right," he used to say, "but I have my fears." So, with the idea of making sure of something for himself for his old age while yet there was any business left to realize upon, he went out of the firm in 1875, leaving four thousand pounds in the concern as a loan. Fortunately for himself, and still more fortunately for the members of the new firm, Thos. J. Barratt and Andrew Pears, Mr. Francis Pears lived to see his nightmare dreams turned to realities of profit and delight.

### An American Experience.

In the world-campaign upon which

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I embarked when I had gathered the reins of management into my own hands, I made it my first aim to get a firm hold of the American market, and set sail for the other side of the Atlantic with that intention. After studying the trade situation for a time and getting to know something of American people and American methods, I saw that what the product I represented stood most in need of was a great and striking testimonial from some man prominently in the public eye and in whom the country had full confidence. That seemed to me the basis of sound advertising. But to whom should I apply? I thought of President Grant, of the Governor of New York, of some of the heroes of the Civil War, but at length came to the conclusion that the man whose words carried most weight was the celebrated preacher and lecturer, Henry Ward Beecher.

Thus it came about that one winter's night, in the teeth of a blinding snowfall, I set out for the great divine's home in Brooklyn. It was with extreme difficulty that I made my way, and when at last I did find myself on the threshold of the Beecher abode a great surprise awaited me. I was shown immediately into the drawing-room, where, to my consternation, Mr. and Mrs. Beecher were entertaining guests. This was not the reception I had looked for. I did not know how to explain; indeed, it was impossible to explain my mission. Perhaps, as they shook my hand warmly, they took me for a visiting English preacher or writer. I confess I felt mighty uncomfortable. Nevertheless, I resolved to stay them all out and see Mr. Beecher alone at all hazards. It taxed my tactfulness to the utmost to bring this about, but by the time he led me into his library and motioned me to a chair I was braced for the occasion. He himself sat down before an open desk. "What can I do for you, Mr.——?" He paused. "Barratt," I said. "Mr. Barratt of London, representing Pears' Soap."

It is not surprising that Mr. Beecher's face underwent a sudden change. Nevertheless, he listened amiably while I told him why I desired to make his acquaintance. I was expatiating on the merits of the article I was interested in, when he checked me with a laugh and wheeled round in his chair, seized a pen, and wrote on half a sheet of paper the famous testimonial beginning "If cleanliness is next to godliness, then," etc.

This paper he handed to me saying he gave it to me with pleasure. I returned him hearty thanks, and with the precious document buttoned up in my pocket hurried to the office of the *New York Herald*. I asked to see the manager and showed him the words Mr. Beecher had written. "I want," I said, "to have this reproduced in facsimile on the front page of the *Herald*"; but although in this instance I did not get my wish I prevailed with the rest of the American Press, and thousands of pounds were spent upon facsimiles of the celebrated preacher's testimonial.

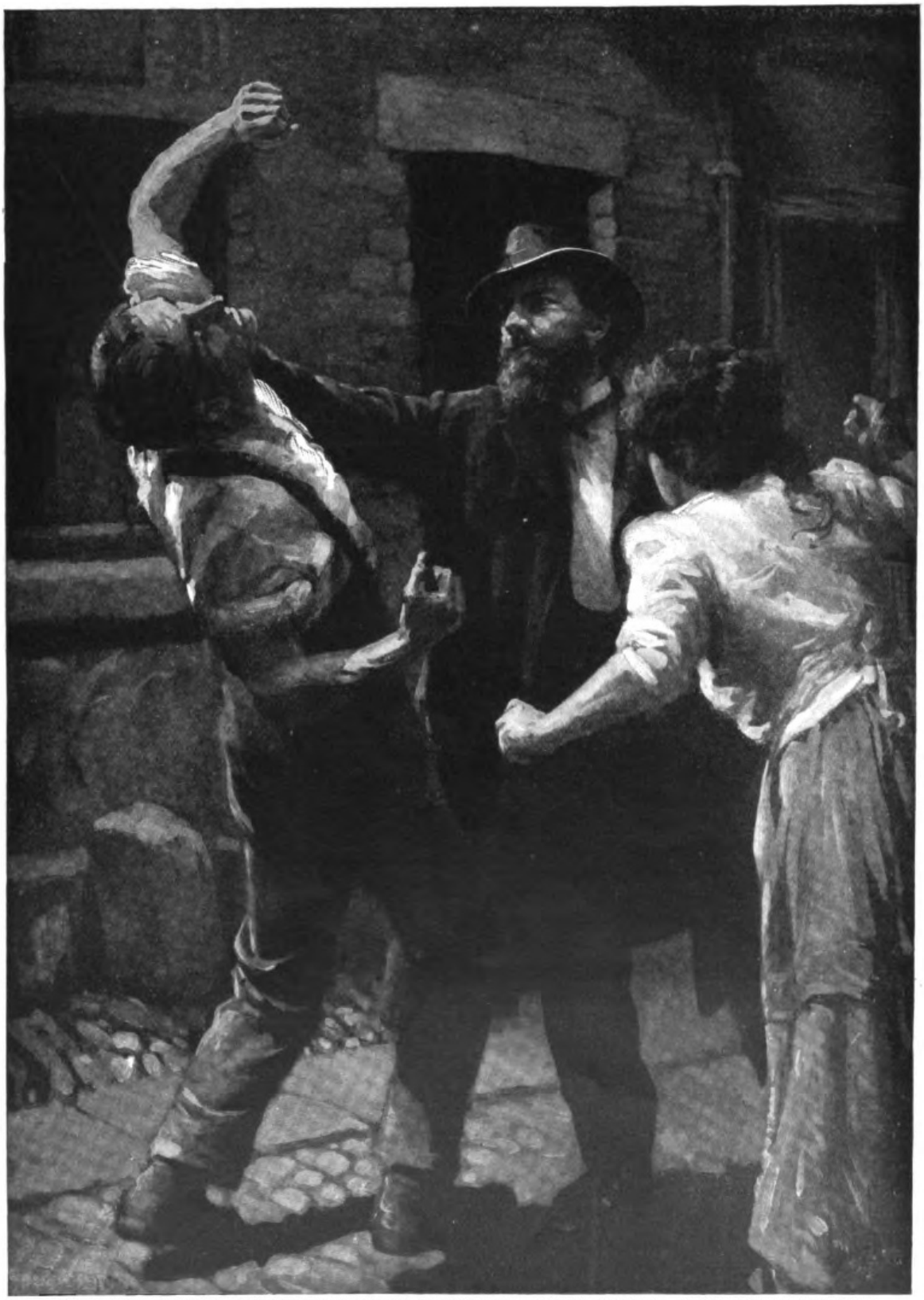
### The Inner History of the "Bubbles" Picture.

When Sir John Millais painted "Bubbles" he had no idea of the picture ever being used for trade advertising purposes, and I can well understand that when he saw the first poster reproduction of this in association with the name of Pears his pride was somewhat shocked. To me, however, advertising is as serious a calling as that of art itself, so long as it is kept within the lines of veracity and confines itself to honestly announcing an honest article; and I saw no degradation to Art in the use to which I put this famous picture. Millais had sold "Bubbles" originally to Sir William Ingram, and must have known that it was his intent to reproduce it for advertising the *Illustrated London News*. From that purpose to the purpose to which I ultimately put it was no great difference, I thought; and I had the satisfaction subsequently of securing the willing services of other Royal Academicians and artists of great fame in a like connection. Even Sir John Millais himself was mollified when he saw how beautifully his work had been reproduced for the hoardings, and I was in treaty with him shortly before his death for further work. That the artist gained in fame by the process is indisputable. By my million-fold representations of "Bubbles" in one artistic form and another I contend that I have added immensely to the painter's popularity. I gave two thousand two hundred pounds for the picture; on its reproductions I have spent—and profitably spent, I admit—a fortune.

### Going to Law.

Among my schoolboy episodes may be counted a brief interval of experience in a lawyer's office. One morning the schoolmaster, after a terrorizing call of "Silence!" announced that a lawyer friend of his wanted a junior clerk—would any boy volunteer for the position? Ready for any adventure, I at once spoke up in breathless assent, and was accepted. So I became a "limb of the law," and copied letters and wrote on parchments and carried messages to and fro

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"I HAD THE GOOD FORTUNE TO KNOW SOMETHING ABOUT BOXING, AND IN A VERY FEW SECONDS THAT WIFE-BEATER WAS BADLY PUNISHED."

for a few weeks; then, getting tired of John Doe and Richard Roe and other legal fictions and facts, I bade a final good-bye to Gray's Inn Square and went farther afield.

But even this little adventure had its influence upon me; ever after I had a sneaking regard for the legal practitioner, and in after years had many close friends in the

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profession, though myself never much of a litigant.

It is worth mentioning, perhaps, in this association, that in the early days of my Pears partnership, on a certain occasion when capital was low and ways and means were not too easy, I applied to a lawyer for a temporary loan of a few hundred pounds, and, although we were strangers to each other, my application was readily granted. "But what about security?" I asked; a point that gave me some concern. "Oh, your good, honest face is security enough for me," said the lawyer; and on the strength of that the transaction was completed, and a friendship sprang up which later years cemented and was continued to the son and grandson of the discerning lawyer. Whether or not he was at the time suffering from distorted vision, or my truculent gaze overbore him, need not now be discussed, seeing that the sequel was so thoroughly satisfactory.

By the way, the late Sir Frank Lockwood, a particular friend of mine, once remarked to me that he believed in the long ago there had been an eminent Old Bailey judge of the name of Barratt: "Perhaps an ancestor," suggested the worthy K.C., with a merry twinkle of the eye. Some time after this, though far from being a pedigree enthusiast, I got a searcher to look through the Old Bailey records, and much was my amusement when it was reported to me that the only person of the name of Barratt to be discovered among the musty archives was one who had been hanged in front of Newgate. I often related this story for the benefit of boastful ancestor-worshippers.

### Hauled Up at Bow Street.

Once, and once only, did I get into the hands of the police, and that was when I had to appear at Bow Street to answer a charge of assault with violence. The circumstances were peculiar. Going home one night from the theatre, the sounds of a woman's screams aroused my attention as I passed through one of the by-streets. A man was beating his wife brutally in the road. Without stopping to think of consequences, I rushed to the rescue of the woman, and hardly had I reached the scene when I found myself put upon my own defence, for the hulking ruffian turned on me savagely, obviously confident of making "short work" of the young fool who had thus recklessly presumed to interfere between man and wife. I wanted something, did I? Well, I should have it. And the fellow "sailed in" with his great fists; but I had the good fortune to know something about boxing, and in a very few seconds that wife-beater was so badly punished that the wife herself, damaged as she was, joined forces with her husband, and when the police came along and saw the mischief which had been done, while one blue-coat picked up the prostrate husband and another attended to the shrieking wife, I, the peacemaker, was arrested as the prime offender, and not until the case came before the Bow Street magistrate was the tangle cleared up; and then the only punishment meted out to me was of a wholly complimentary character.

### Where Does Advertising Begin—or End?

Apropos of some remarks by Lord Northcliffe to a gathering of advertising men, I wrote:—

In resuscitating our ancient friend, Rameses II., and holding him up as an example of man's inborn tendency to advertise—either himself or something he is interested in—the speaker opened up a vast and wonderful field of speculation. Advertising, of course, had its beginning on the personal side in the morning of the world. Nature herself set man the example. The advertising lure is on all created things—on the leaves of the trees, the flowers of the gardens, the plumage of the bird, the dress and decoration of man or woman—the shine of a hat or a boot, the rustle of a robe, the flash of a diamond, the set of the hair, the twist of a moustache. Whatever a man specially interests himself in, that thing he wants to advertise, whether it be an empire or a personality, a motor-car or a publication. I went into advertising myself in order to make a business worth talking about and patronizing, of a business that was very small—small but good and sound. And here I may remark that, without the good and sound basis, advertising can never come to anything very great. If you have got that foundation you may blaze away as hard as you like—or can. Still, in blazing away in advertising one's fingers are apt to get burnt unless due precautions are taken and some rational system is adopted. In nothing is haphazard more fatal. Many people imagine that advertising, and especially the invention of advertising ideas, is the simplest thing in the world. I am hearing from such people every day with suggestions and drawings and what not, mostly elaborately worked out; but from all this mass of the supposed balm of Gilead—the crystal drop from the Pierian spring—not a whole year of three hundred and sixty-five days brings me any sign of



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the master-flash of genius. No, you have to think from the inside about these things; your ideas have to reflect your aims, your resources, your knowledge of what has "gone before," your own particular play of fancy, or your own stock of facts. The man outside cannot realize these things. I have had visits of "all sorts and conditions" of purveyors of advertising notions—from poets and parsons, schoolboys, actresses, professors, and ladies of fashion—while the mother with the little boy who is the exact image of "Bubbles," or a little nicer, is never long absent from our portals. It is not so much an absence of good ideas outside as the necessity of the melting-pot of special experience through which to pass them before they can become of real utility.

### Who Pays the Cost of Advertising?

Certainly not the consumer; certainly not the retailer. Here is the real truth of the matter. Money wisely spent in advertising increases sales and profits to such an extent that sufficient capital is provided for the operation of economies naturally resulting from buying and manufacturing in larger quantities. The bigger the volume of trade the cheaper is the relative production. In fact, as all leading advertisers know, production is cheapened in a much greater degree by advertising than is represented by the money spent in advertising. Were it otherwise there would be no use in advertising.

Much as we advertisers love the newspapers, to whose revenues we contribute so handsomely, we only perform this service because we get more out of the publicity they give us than they get out of us—with occasional exceptions, perhaps, which are soon rectified. But what is of still greater importance is that, in ratio with the cheapening of production, there is a cheapening of the advertised article to the public.

### Scientific Experiences.

As a young man I was one of a small band of enthusiasts who used to meet for scientific reunions at the rooms in Piccadilly of the late Mr. Hardwick, founder, and for many years editor, of *Science Gossip*. One of the results of these gatherings was the starting of the Quekett Club for working microscopists, of which I was an original member. I pursued this science diligently in my leisure moments, became a Fellow of the Royal Microscopical Society, and in course of time accumulated a valuable collection of microscopical instruments and objects.

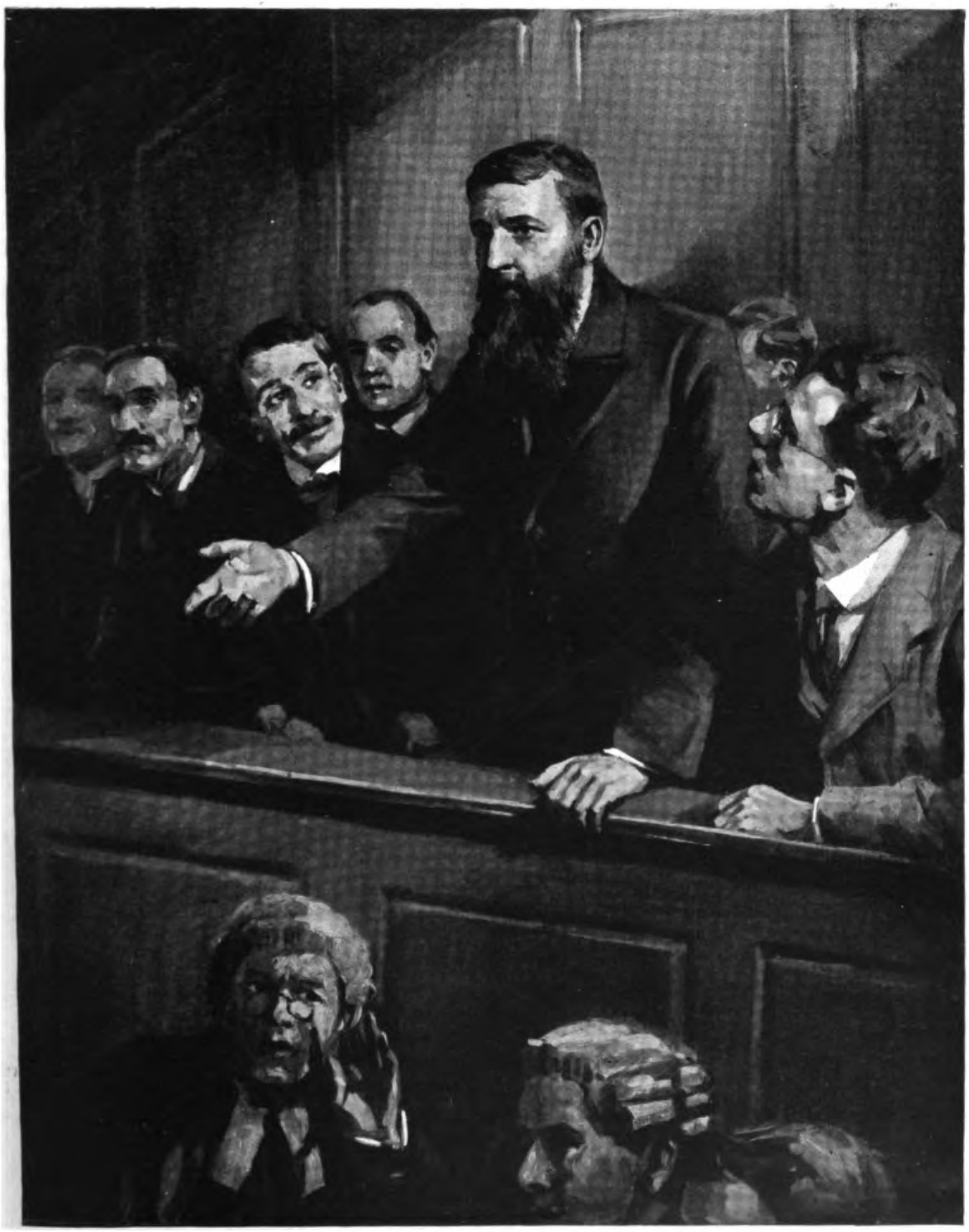
Another branch of science that deeply interested me was Chemistry. My studies in this direction, at first undertaken out of a real love of the subject, were later turned to useful account in connection with my business, for much depends upon the right selection and appraising of saponaceous components in the successful manufacture of a high-class soap of historic formula.

In many ways, indeed, my chemical knowledge was of use to me, and once led to a scene in a court of law. I was on the jury. A learned counsel was cross-examining a witness in regard to the quality of a certain kind of copperas, which happened to be the subject in dispute. "Now, tell me," said the barrister, "how much of actual copper was there in this stuff that was sold as copperas?" The witness was dumbfounded and could not answer, and the question was repeated. This was more than I could stand, and jumping up from my seat, I begged to inform the cross-examiner that copper had nothing whatever to do with copperas. Counsel resented my interruption and pooh-poohed my observation, but finding I would not yield my point he appealed to the judge, who himself had to refer to an authority before he could dispose of the puzzle. When it was ultimately discovered that I was correct it was somewhat reluctantly conceded that this was so, but in a way that seemed to warn me that, though I was let off this time, I had better not repeat this sort of thing; and it was many a long year before I was asked to sit on a jury again.

### Present-Day Business Conditions.

Some people imagine that in these times business is a terrible affair of hustle-bustle, bounce, and boom. These people do not see into the heart of things. I know what I am talking about when I say that business was never more orderly than now, never more honest, never better conducted, never so rich in opportunities for those who have business intelligence and the right capacity and conscience for work. True, our business pace has been wonderfully increased, our business methods have been greatly intensified, our business aids immensely multiplied, and our money-making propensities in nowise slackened; but with all the flutter and fuss of steam, electricity, telegraphy, aviation, motoring, and the rest, the winning qualities in business are the same now as when the De la Poles, the Whittingtons, the Greshams,

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"JUMPING UP FROM MY SEAT, I BEGGED TO INFORM THE CROSS-EXAMINER THAT COPPER HAD NOTHING WHATEVER TO DO WITH COPPERAS."

the Denisons, and other commercial and financial magnates of former times rose to greatness. Conditions change, but not human nature. The present of any period always seems a mighty whirl of advance upon the past; but the forward-looking habit is the mental attitude to encourage.

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# A MAN OF MEANS

No. VI.

THE EPISODE OF

## THE HIRED PAST.

By

C·H·Bovill *and*

P·G·Wodehouse

*Illustrated by Alfred Leete*

Roland Bleke was a young clerk in a provincial seed-merchant's office when he acquired a large fortune by most unexpected means. He is engaged, in the following instalment of this entertaining series, in the final adventure of his efforts to spend it.

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"WHAT do you mean — you can't marry him after all? After all what? Why can't you marry him? You are perfectly childish."

Lord Evenwood's gentle voice, which had in its time lulled the House of Peers to slumber more often than any voice ever heard in the Gilded Chamber, had in it a note of unwonted but quite justifiable irritation. If there was one thing more than another that Lord Evenwood disliked, it was any interference with arrangements already made.

"The man," he continued, "is not unsightly. The man is not conspicuously vulgar. The man does not eat peas with his knife. The man pronounces his aitches with meticulous care and accuracy. The man, moreover, is worth rather more than a quarter of a million pounds. I repeat, you are childish."

"Yes, I know he's a very decent little chap, father," said Lady Eva. "It's not that at all."

"I should be gratified, then, to hear what, in your opinion, it is."

"Well, *do* you think I could be happy with him?"

Lady Kimbuck gave tongue. She was Lord Evenwood's sister. She spent a very happy widowhood interfering in the affairs of the various branches of her family.

"We're not asking you to be happy. You have such odd ideas of happiness. Your idea of happiness is to be married to your cousin Gerry, whose only visible means of support, so far as I can gather, is the four hundred a year which he draws as a member for a constituency which has every intention of throwing him out at the next election."

Lady Eva blushed. Lady Kimbuck's faculty for nosing out the secrets of her family had made her justly disliked from the Hebrides to Southern Cornwall.

"Young O'Rion is not to be thought of," said Lord Evenwood, firmly. "Not for an instant. Apart from anything else, his politics are all wrong. Moreover, you are engaged to this Mr. Bleke. It is a sacred responsibility not lightly to be evaded. You cannot pledge your word one day to enter upon the most solemn contract known to—ah—the civilized world, and break it the next. It is not fair to the man. It is not fair to me. You know that all I live for is to see you comfortably settled. If I could myself do anything for you, the matter would be different. But these abominable land taxes

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"LADY KIMBUCK GAVE TONGUE. SHE SPENT A VERY HAPPY WIDOWHOOD INTERFERING IN THE AFFAIRS OF THE VARIOUS BRANCHES OF HER FAMILY."

and Blowick—especially Blowick—no, no, it's out of the question. You will be very sorry if you do anything foolish. I can assure you that Roland Blekes are not to be found—ah—on every bush. Men are extremely shy of marrying nowadays."

"Especially," said Lady Kimbuck, "into a family like ours. What with Blowick's scandal, and that shocking business of your grandfather and the circus-woman, to say nothing of your poor father's trouble in 'eighty-five—

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"Thank you, Sophia," interrupted Lord Evenwood, hurriedly. "It is unnecessary to go into all that now. Suffice it that there are adequate reasons, apart from all moral obligations, why Eva should not break her word to Mr. Bleke."

Lady Kimbuck's encyclopædic grip of the family annals was a source of the utmost discomfort to her relatives. It was known that more than one firm of publishers had made her tempting offers for her reminiscences, and the family looked on like nervous spectators at a battle while Cupidity fought its ceaseless fight with Laziness; for the Evenwood family had at various times and in various ways stimulated the circulation of the evening papers. Most of them were living down something, and it was Lady Kimbuck's habit, when thwarted in her lightest whim, to retire to her boudoir and announce that she was not to be disturbed, as she was at last making a start on her book. Abject surrender followed on the instant.

At this point in the discussion she folded up her crochet-work and rose.

"It is absolutely necessary for you, my dear, to make a good match, or you will all be ruined. I, of course, can always support my declining years with literary work, but——"

Lady Eva groaned. Against this last argument there was no appeal.

Lady Kimbuck patted her affectionately on the shoulder.

"There, run along now," she said. "I dare say you've got a headache or something that made you say a lot of foolish things you didn't mean. Go down to the drawing-room. I expect Mr. Bleke is waiting there to say good night to you. I am sure he must be getting quite impatient."

Down in the drawing-room Roland Bleke was hoping against hope that Lady Eva's prolonged absence might be due to the fact that she had gone to bed with a headache, and that he might escape the nightly interview which he so dreaded.

Reviewing his career, as he sat there, Roland came to the conclusion that women had the knack of affecting him with a form of temporary insanity. They temporarily changed his whole nature. They made him feel for a brief while that he was a dashing young man, capable of the highest flights of love. It was only later that the reaction came and he realized that he was nothing of the sort. At heart he was afraid of women, and in the entire list of the women of whom he had been afraid he could not find one who had terrified him so much as Lady Eva Blyton.

Other women—notably Maraquita, now happily helping to direct the destinies of Paranoya—had frightened him by their individuality. Lady Eva frightened him both by her individuality and the atmosphere of aristocratic exclusiveness which she conveyed. He had no idea whatever of what was the proper procedure for a man engaged to the daughter of an earl. Daughters of earls had been to him till now mere names in the society columns of the morning paper. The very rules of the game were beyond him. He felt like a confirmed Association footballer suddenly called upon to play in an international Rugby match.

All along, from the very moment when—to his unbounded astonishment — she had accepted him, he had known that he was making a mistake; but he never realized it with such painful clearness as he did this evening. He was filled with a sort of blind terror. He cursed the fate which had taken him to the charity bazaar at which he had first come under the notice of Lady Kimbuck. The fatuous snobbishness which had made him leap at her invitation to spend a few days at Evenwood Towers he regretted; but for that he blamed himself less. Further acquaintance with Lady Kimbuck had convinced him that if she had wanted him she would have got him somehow, whether he had accepted or refused.

What he really blamed himself for was his mad proposal. There had been no need for it. True, Lady Eva had created a riot of burning emotions in his breast from the moment when they met; but he should have had the sense to realize that she was not the right mate for him, even though he might have a quarter of a million tucked away in gilt-edged securities. Their lives could not possibly mix. He was a commonplace young man with a fondness for the pleasures of the people. He liked cheap papers, picture-palaces, and Association football. Merely to think of Association football in connection with her was enough to make the folly of his conduct clear. He ought to have been content to worship her from afar as some inaccessible goddess.

A light step outside the door made his heart stop beating.

"I've just looked in to say good night, Mr.—er—Roland," she said, holding out her hand. "Do excuse me. I've got such a headache."

"Oh, yes; rather. I'm awfully sorry."

If there was one person in the world Roland despised and hated at that moment, it was himself.

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"Are you going out with the guns to-morrow?" asked Lady Eva, languidly.

"Oh, yes; rather. I mean, no. I'm afraid I don't shoot."

The back of his neck began to glow. He had no illusions about himself. He was the biggest ass in Christendom.

"Perhaps you'd like to play a round of golf, then?"

"Oh, yes; rather. I mean, no." There it was again, that awful phrase. He was certain he had not intended to utter it. She must be thinking him a perfect lunatic. "I don't play golf."

They stood looking at each other for a moment. It seemed to Roland that her gaze was partly contemptuous, partly pitying. He longed to tell her that, though she had happened to pick on his weak points in the realm of sport, there were things he could do. An insane desire came upon him to babble about his school football team. Should he ask her to feel his quite respectable biceps? No.

"Never mind," she said, kindly. "I dare say we shall think of something to amuse you."

She held out her hand again. He took it in his for the briefest possible instant, painfully conscious the while that his own hand was clammy from the emotion through which he had been passing.

"Good night."

"Good night."

Thank Heaven she was gone. That let him out for another twelve hours at least.

A quarter of an hour later found Roland still sitting where she had left him, his head in his hands. The groan of an overwrought soul escaped him.

"I can't do it!"

He sprang to his feet.

"I won't do it!"

A smooth voice from behind him spoke.

"I think you are quite right, sir—if I may make the remark."

Roland had hardly ever been so startled in his life. In the first place, he was not aware of having uttered his thoughts aloud; in the second, he had imagined that he was alone in the room. And so, a moment before, he had been. But the owner of the voice possessed, among other qualities, the cat-like faculty of entering a room perfectly noiselessly—a fact which had won for him, in the course of a long career in the service of the best families, the flattering position of star witness in a number of England's raciest divorce cases.

Mr. Teal, the butler—for it was no less a celebrity who had broken in on Roland's reverie—was a long, thin man of a somewhat priestly cast of countenance. He lacked that air of reproving hauteur which many butlers possess, and it was for this reason that Roland had felt drawn to him during the black days of his stay at Evenwood Towers. Teal had been uncommonly nice to him on the whole. He had seemed to Roland, stricken by interviews with his host and Lady Kimbuck, the only human thing in the place.

He liked Teal. On the other hand, Teal was certainly taking a liberty. He could, if he so pleased, tell Teal to go to the devil. Technically he had the right to freeze Teal with a look.

He did neither of these things. He was feeling very lonely and very forlorn in a strange and depressing world, and Teal's voice and manner were soothing.

"Hearing you speak, and seeing nobody else in the room," went on the butler, "I thought for a moment that you were addressing me."

This was not true, and Roland knew it was not true. Instinct told him that Teal knew that he knew it was not true; but he did not press the point.

"What do you mean—you think I am quite right?" he said. "You don't know what I was thinking about."

Teal smiled indulgently.

"On the contrary, sir. A child could have guessed it. You have just come to the decision—in my opinion a thoroughly sensible one—that your engagement to her ladyship cannot be allowed to go on. You are quite right, sir. It won't do."

Personal magnetism covers a multitude of sins. Roland was perfectly well aware that he ought not to be standing here chatting over his and Lady Eva's intimate affairs with a butler; but such was Teal's magnetism that he was quite unable to do the right thing and tell him to mind his own business. "Teal, you forget yourself," would have covered the situation. Roland, however, was physically incapable of saying, "Teal, you forget yourself." The bird knows all the time that he ought not to stand talking to the snake, but he is incapable of ending the conversation. Roland was conscious of a momentary wish that he was the sort of man who could tell butlers that they forgot themselves. But then that sort of man would never be in this sort of trouble. The "Teal-you-forget-yourself" type of man would be a first-class shot, a plus golfer, and would

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certainly consider himself extremely lucky to be engaged to Lady Eva.

"The question is," went on Mr. Teal, "how are we to break it off?"

Roland felt that, as he had sinned against all the decencies in allowing the butler to discuss his affairs with him, he might just as well go the whole hog and allow the discussion to run its course. And it was an undeniable relief to talk about the infernal thing to someone.

He nodded gloomily and committed himself. Teal resumed his remarks with the gusto of a fellow-conspirator.

"It's not an easy thing to do gracefully, sir; believe me, it isn't. And it's got to be done gracefully, or not at all. You can't go to her ladyship and say, 'It's all off, and so am I,' and catch the next train for London. The rupture must be of her ladyship's making. If some fact, some disgraceful information, concerning you were to come to her ladyship's ears, that would be a simple way out of the difficulty."

He eyed Roland meditatively.

"If, for instance, you had ever been in jail, sir!"

"Well, I haven't."

"No offence intended, sir, I'm sure. I merely remembered that you had made a great deal of money very quickly. My experience of gentlemen who have made a great deal of money very quickly is that they have generally done their bit of time. But, of course, if you—— Let me think. Do you drink, sir?"

"No."

Mr. Teal sighed. Roland could not help feeling that he was disappointing the old man a good deal.

"You do not, I suppose, chance to have a past?" asked Mr. Teal, not very hopefully. "I use the word in its technical sense. A deserted wife? Some poor creature you have treated shamefully?"

At the risk of sinking still farther in the butler's esteem, Roland was compelled to answer in the negative.

"I was afraid not," said Mr. Teal, shaking his head. "Thinking it all over yesterday, I said to myself, 'I'm afraid he wouldn't have one.' You don't look like the sort of gentleman who had done much with his time."

"Thinking it over?"

"Not on your account, sir," explained Mr. Teal. "On the family's. I disapproved of this match from the first. A man who has served a family as long as I have had the honour of serving his lordship's comes to entertain a high regard for the family prestige. And, with no offence to yourself, sir, this would not have done."

"Well, it looks as if it would have to do," said Roland, gloomily. "I can't see any way out of it."

"I can, sir. My niece at Aldershot."

Mr. Teal wagged his head at him with a kind of priestly archness.

"You cannot have forgotten my niece at Aldershot?"

Roland stared at him dumbly. It was like a line out of a melodrama. He feared, first for his own, then for the butler's sanity. The latter was smiling gently, as one who sees light in a difficult situation.

"I've never been at Aldershot in my life."

"For our purposes you have, sir. But I'm afraid I am puzzling you. Let me explain. I've got a niece over at Aldershot. I am sure she would do it for a consideration."

"Do what?"

"Be your past, sir. Dyed yellow hair, sir," he went on, with enthusiasm, "done all frizzy. You couldn't find a better if you tried for a twelvemonth."

"But, I say——!"

"I suppose a hundred wouldn't hurt you?"

"Well, no, I suppose not; but——"

"Then put the whole thing in my hands, sir. I'll ask leave off to-morrow and pop over and see her. I'll arrange for her to come here the day after to see you. Leave it all to me. To-night you must write the letters."

"Letters?"

"Naturally there would be letters, sir. It is an inseparable feature of these cases."

"Do you mean that I have got to write to her? But I shouldn't know what to say. I've never seen her."

"That will be quite all right, sir, if you place yourself in my hands. I will come to your room after everybody's gone to bed and help you write those letters. You have some note-paper with your own address on it? Then it will all be perfectly simple."

When, some hours later, he read over the ten or twelve exceedingly passionate epistles which, with the butler's assistance, he had succeeded in writing to Miss Maud Chilvers, Roland came to the conclusion that there must have been a time when Mr. Teal was a good deal less respectable than he appeared to be at present. Byronic was the only adjective applicable to his collaborator's style of amatory composition. In every letter there

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"'A THOUSAND KISSES ON YOUR LOVELY ROSEBUD OF A MOUTH.' DON'T YOU THINK THAT IS A LITTLE TOO WARMLY COLOURED?"



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were passages against which Roland had felt compelled to make a modest protest.

"'A thousand kisses on your lovely rose-bud of a mouth.' Don't you think that is a little too warmly coloured? And, 'I am languishing for the pressure of your ivory arms about my neck and the sweep of your silken hair against my cheek.' What I mean is—well, what about it, you know?"

"The phrases," said Mr. Teal, not without a touch of displeasure, "to which you take exception are taken bodily from correspondence (which I happened to have the advantage of perusing) addressed by the late Lord Evenwood to Animalcula, Queen of the High Wire at Astley's Circus. His lordship, I may add, was considered an authority in these matters."

Roland criticized no more. He handed over the letters, which, at Mr. Teal's direction, he had headed with various dates, covering roughly a period of about two months antecedent to his arrival at the Towers.

"That," Mr. Teal explained, "will make your conduct definitely unpardonable. With this woman's kisses hot upon your lips"—Mr. Teal was still slightly aglow with the fire of inspiration—"you have the effrontery to come here and offer yourself to her ladyship."

With Roland's timid suggestion that it was perhaps a mistake to overdo the atmosphere, the butler found himself unable to agree.

"You can't make yourself out too bad. If you don't pitch it hot and strong, her ladyship might quite likely forgive you. Then where would you be?"

Miss Maud Chilvers, of Aldershot, burst into Roland's life like one of the shells of her native heath two days later at about five in the afternoon.

It was an entrance which any stage-manager might have been proud of having arranged. The lighting, the grouping, the lead-up—all were perfect. The family had just finished tea in the long drawing-room. Lady Kimbuck was crocheting, Lord Evenwood dozing, Lady Eva reading, and Roland thinking. A peaceful scene.

A soft, rippling murmur, scarcely to be reckoned a snore, had just proceeded from Lord Evenwood's parted lips, when the door opened, and Teal announced:—

"Miss Chilvers."

Roland stiffened in his chair. Now that the ghastly moment had come, he felt too petrified with fear even to act the little part in which he had been diligently rehearsed by the obliging Mr. Teal. He simply sat and did nothing.

It was speedily made clear to him that Miss Chilvers would do all the actual doing that was necessary. The butler had drawn no false picture of her personal appearance. Dyed yellow hair done all frizzy was but one facet of her many-sided impossibilities. In the serene surroundings of the long drawing-room she looked more unspeakable than Roland had ever imagined her. With such a leading lady his drama could not fail of success. He should have been pleased; he was merely appalled. The thing might have a happy ending, but while it lasted it was going to be terrible.

She had a flatteringly attentive reception. Nobody failed to notice her. Lord Evenwood woke with a start, and stared at her as if she had been some ghost from his trouble of 'eighty-five. Lady Eva's face expressed sheer amazement. Lady Kimbuck, laying down her crochet-work, took one look at the apparition, and instantly decided that one of her numerous erring relatives had been at it again. Of all the persons in the room she was possibly the only one completely cheerful. She was used to these situations and enjoyed them. Her mind, roaming into the past, recalled the night when her cousin Warminster had been pinked by a stiletto in his own drawing-room by a lady from South America. Happy days, happy days!

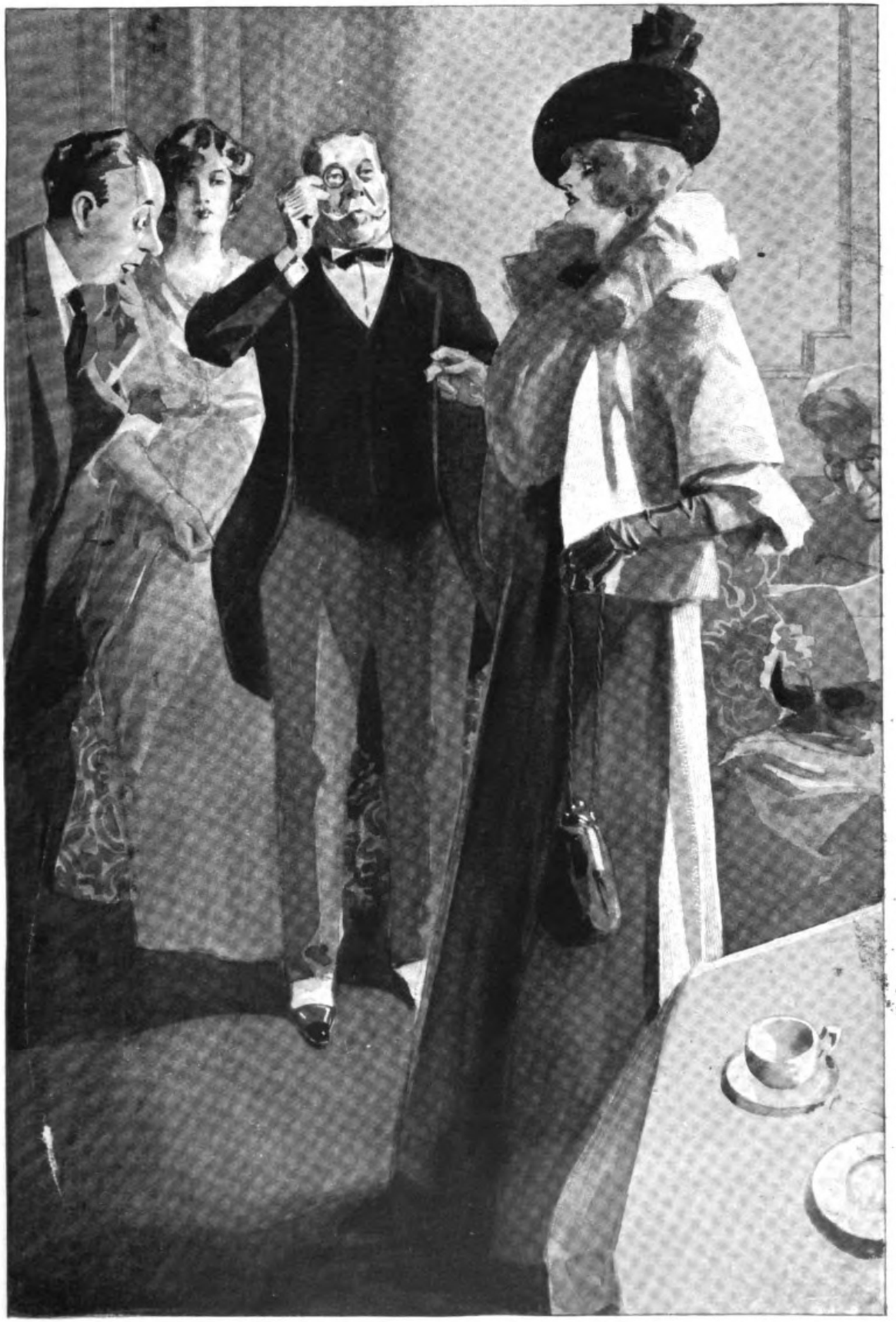
Lord Evenwood had by this time come to the conclusion that the festive Blowick must be responsible for this visitation. He rose with dignity.

"To what are we——?" he began.

Miss Chilvers, resolute young woman, had no intention of standing there while other people talked. She shook her gleaming head and burst into speech.

"Oh, yes; I know I've no right to be coming walking in here among a lot of perfect strangers at their teas, but what I say is, 'Right's right and wrong's wrong all the world over,' and I may be poor, but I have my feelings. No, thank you, I won't sit down. I've not come for the week-end, I've come to say a few words, and when I've said them I'll go, and not before. A lady friend of mine happened to be reading her *Daily Sketch* the other day, and she said, 'Halloa, halloa!' and passed it on to me with her thumb on a picture which had under it that it was Lady Eva Blyton, who was engaged to be

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"'MR. BLEKE,' SAID LORD EVENWOOD, STERNLY, 'WHO IS THIS WOMAN?'"

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married to Mr. Roland Bleke. And when I read that, *I* said 'Halloa, halloa!' too, I give you *my* word. And not being able to travel at once, owing to being prostrated with the shock, I came along to-day, just to have a look at Mr. Roland Blooming Bleke, and ask him if he's forgotten that he happens to be engaged to *me*. That's all. I know it's the sort of little thing that might slip any gentleman's mind, but I thought it might be worth mentioning. So now!"

Roland, perspiring in the shadows at the far end of the room, felt that Miss Chilvers was overdoing it. There was no earthly need for all this sort of thing. Just a simple announcement of the engagement would have been quite sufficient. It was too obvious to him that his ally was thoroughly enjoying herself. She had the centre of the stage, and did not intend lightly to relinquish it.

"My good girl," said Lady Kimbuck, "talk less and prove more. When did Mr. Bleke promise to marry you."

"Oh, it's all right. I'm not expecting you to believe my word. I've got all the proofs you'll want. Here's his letters."

Lady Kimbuck's eyes gleamed. She took the package eagerly. She never lost an opportunity of reading compromising letters. She enjoyed them as literature, and there was never any knowing when they might come in useful.

"Roland," said Lady Eva, quietly, "haven't you anything to contribute to this conversation?"

Miss Chilvers clutched at her bodice. Cinema palaces were a passion with her, and she was up in the correct business.

"Is he here? In this room?"

Roland slunk from the shadows.

"Mr. Bleke," said Lord Evenwood, sternly, "who is this woman?"

Roland uttered a kind of strangled cough.

"Are these letters in your handwriting?" asked Lady Kimbuck, almost cordially. She had seldom read better compromising letters in her life, and she was agreeably surprised that one whom she had always imagined a colourless stick should have been capable of them.

Roland nodded.

"Well, it's lucky you're rich," said Lady Kimbuck, philosophically. "What are you asking for these?" she inquired of Miss Chilvers.

"Exactly," said Lord Evenwood, relieved. "Precisely. Your sterling common sense is admirable, Sophia. You place the whole matter at once on a business-like footing."

"Do you imagine for a moment——" began Miss Chilvers, slowly.

"Yes," said Lady Kimbuck. "How much?"

Miss Chilvers sobbed.

"If I have lost him for ever——"

Lady Eva rose.

"But you haven't," she said, pleasantly. "I wouldn't dream of standing in your way." She drew a ring from her finger, placed it on the table, and walked to the door.

"I am not engaged to Mr. Bleke," she said, as she reached it.

Roland never knew quite how he had got away from the Towers. He had confused memories in which the principals of the drawing-room scene figured in various ways, all unpleasant. It was a portion of his life on which he did not care to dwell.

Safely back in his flat, however, he gradually recovered his normal spirits. Indeed, now that the tumult and the shouting had, so to speak, died, and he was free to take a broad view of his position, he felt distinctly happier than usual. That Lady Kimbuck had passed for ever from his life was enough in itself to make for gaiety.

He was humming blithely one morning as he opened his letters; outside the sky was blue and the sun shining. It was good to be alive.

He read the first letter. The sky was still blue, the sun still shining.

"DEAR SIR," it ran—"We have been instructed by our client, Miss Maud Chilvers, of the Goat and Compasses, Aldershot, to institute proceedings against you for breach of promise of marriage. In the event of your being desirous to avoid the expense and publicity of litigation, we are instructed to say that Miss Chilvers would be prepared to accept the sum of ten thousand pounds in settlement of her claim against you. We would further add that in support of her case our client has in her possession a number of letters written by yourself to her, all of which bear strong *prima facie* evidence of the alleged promise to marry; and she will be able, in addition, to call as witnesses in support of her case the Earl of Evenwood, Lady Kimbuck, and Lady Eva Blyton, in whose presence, at a recent date, you acknowledged that you had promised to marry our client.

"Trusting that we may hear from you in the course of post, we are, dear sir, yours faithfully, HARRISON, HARRISON, HARRISON, AND HARRISON."

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# WONDERS OF BIRD-GROUPING.

## HOW THE BIRD-GROUPS IN THE AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY WERE CONSTRUCTED.

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A RECENT visitor to New York, after being shown everything of interest—from the Statue of Liberty to the Woolworth Building—declared with considerable emphasis that to him the most beautiful, the most fascinating, and the most wonderful "exhibit" was the bird-groups in the American Museum of Natural History. "There is nothing to compare with them," he said, "in any other country, and they should serve as a practical example to the authorities of every natural history museum throughout Europe."

The visitor was quite right. The bird-groups of which New York is so justly proud are the result of wonderful patience and skill, marvellous regard to detail, and a knowledge of birds and bird-life gained by years of personal observation. To Mr. Frank M. Chapman, the Curator of Ornithology, belongs the honour of having originated the idea of these bird-groups, and also of having superintended the carrying out of the work of construction.

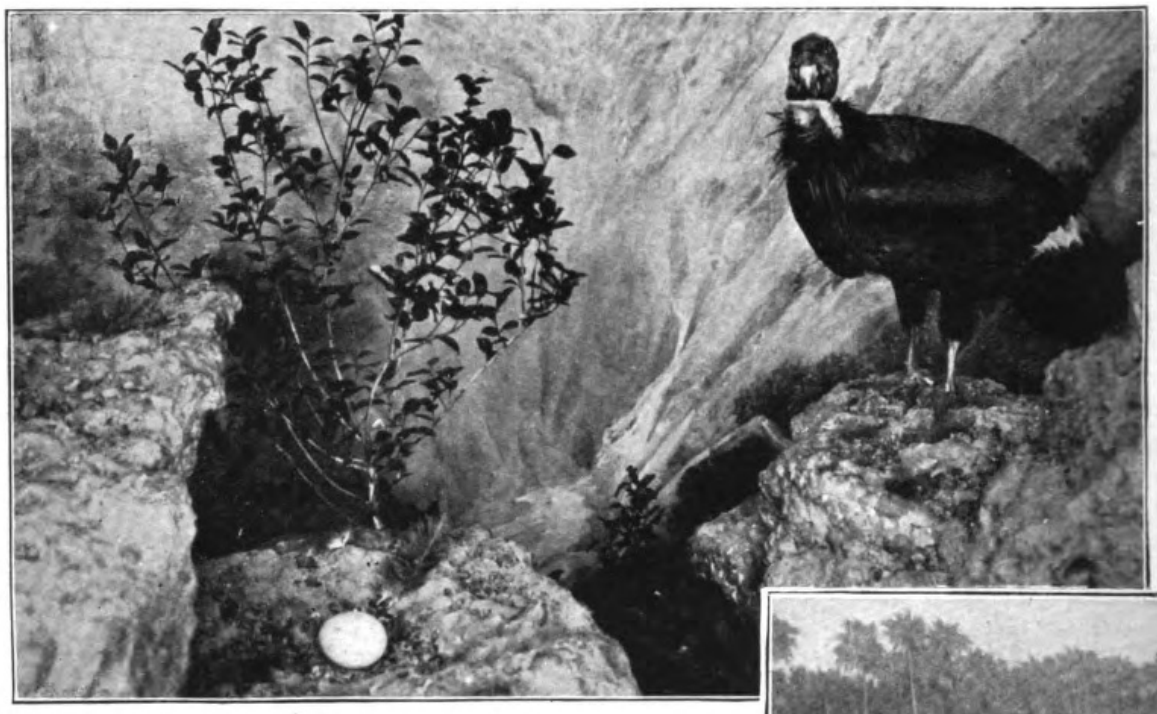
Recently the present writer called on Mr. Chapman, and learned many interesting details regarding these groups of birds, which were designed to illustrate not only the habits, but also the haunts, or "habitats," of the species shown. "Each group," Mr. Chapman explained, "includes the nest, eggs, and young, besides the adult bird or birds, with a reproduction of from sixty to a hundred and sixty square feet of the nest's immediate surroundings. To this accurate and realistic representation of the home of the species is added a painting from nature of its habitat, the real foreground being connected with the painted background in such a manner that one often does not at first see where the former ends and the latter begins. The whole, therefore, gives an adequate conception of the nature of the country the birds inhabit and the conditions under which they live."

That was Mr. Chapman's primary idea when these bird-groups first suggested themselves to him. It might be mentioned that the backgrounds referred to are not more or less fanciful sketches of the haunts of the birds associated with them, but they are careful studies from nature of definite localities, and therefore possess a geographical as well as an ornithological value. "When selecting subjects for treatment," Mr. Chapman continued, "an effort was made to include the birds of widely diversified types of country, in order that the series, as a whole, should portray not only the habitats of certain American birds, but America as well. From the Bahamas to the Gulf of St. Lawrence, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, localities are represented which show at least the more characteristic phases of our landscape. Some subjects were in near-by places and were easily visited; others were in remote regions and were reached with more or less difficulty. Altogether it is estimated that about 65,000 miles were travelled to secure the material on which these groups are based."

Each group in the series, beginning with Bird Rock, in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, in 1898, is the result of a special Museum expedition in charge of the Curator of Ornithology (Mr. Chapman), accompanied by a "preparator" and an artist whose work it was to paint the backgrounds "on the spot."

"After arriving at our destination," Mr. Chapman further explained, "and before securing specimens, the birds were first studied and photographed at short range from a specially-constructed umbrella-blind. This was sometimes placed in the very heart of the bird-community, as, for instance, with the flamingos and pelicans; or even in the tree-tops, as with the egrets. At the same time the artist made studies on which to base the final background, as well as detailed colour sketches of leaf and blossom, while the 'preparator' collected the needed accessories, making casts or preserving vegetation

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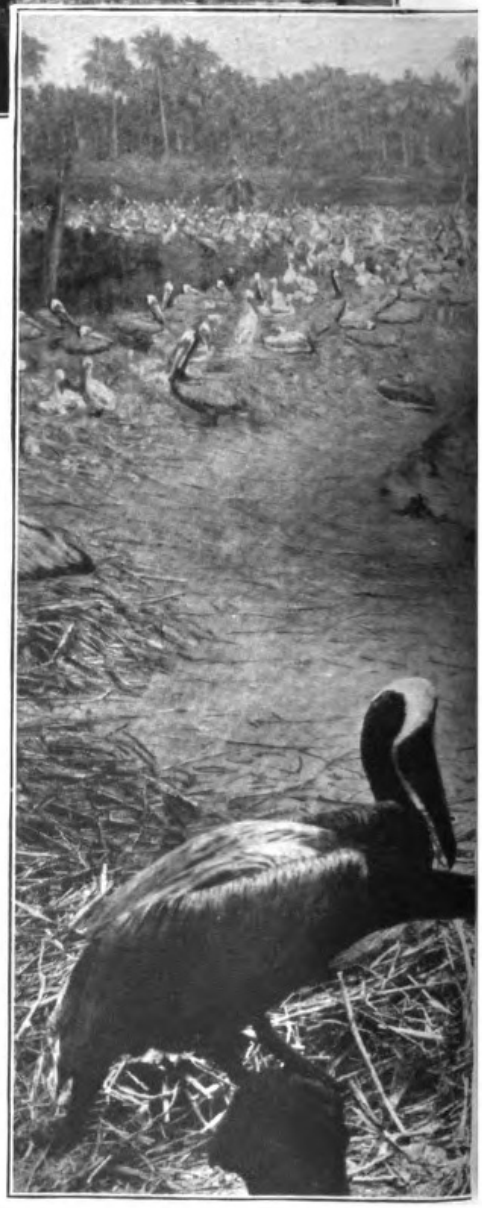
NO. 1.—A CALIFORNIA CONDOR, WITH ITS SINGLE EGG RESTING ON THE LEDGE OF A ROCK.

in various solutions as occasion required. When the field-work was concluded, the crates of branches, carefully-packed boxes of foliage, nests, birds, and photographic plates, sacks of earth and other material, according to the nature of the subject, were shipped to the Museum, subsequently to be prepared in the laboratories."

Naturally one of the most important features of these groups is the exact reproduction of the vegetation surrounding the habitats of the different birds selected. This work was placed in the hands of Mr. J. D. Figgens, Chief of the Museum's Department of Preparation, and that it was carried out in a very artistic and masterly way is proved by the groups themselves. Many a naturalist has marvelled at the faithful manner in which the minutest detail has been observed, and were the birds alive they might be forgiven for labouring under the impression that they were "at home." Mr. Figgens reproduced the vegetation in wax, either from plaster casts of the original, or by careful duplication of the original itself. The colour of the leaves and vegetation generally was obtained by means of an air-brush or atomizer, by which the most delicate tints and textures were faithfully rendered.

A very striking group is one showing a California condor, with its single egg resting on the ledge of a rock (No. 1). In viewing this group the visitor is supposed to be in the condor's cave, from which he looks up the canyon. When the studies were made the cave was not occupied, a passing hunter having wantonly shot one of the birds on its perch on a neighbouring rock, its body falling into the river.

"We made our studies for this group," said Mr. Chapman, "in Piru Canyon, some twenty miles north of the



NO. 2.—THE BROWN PELICANS

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village of Piru and fifty miles south-east of Santa Barbara, where for many years a pair of birds had nested in a cave which pierced the vertical canyon, one hundred and fifty feet above the water. From this cave were taken the young condors now living in the National Zoological Park in Washington."

The California condor some years ago was becoming so rare a bird that steps were taken to discover the reason, and after a little investigation it was shown that this was occasioned by its feeding on the poisoned carcasses of cattle exposed by ranchmen as bait for bears, panthers, and wolves. Since these animals have now become almost exterminated or gradually decreased poisoned meat is no longer employed, with the result that the California condor is once again holding its own.

A group which might have been photographed direct from nature—and in the reproduction there is nothing to show that it is not—is that which shows the brown pelicans on Pelican Island, Florida (No. 2). Pelican Island used to be a favourite resort for pleasure-seekers, and the visitors molested the pelicans so unmercifully—killing them and robbing their nests—that the famous colony was threatened with complete annihilation. But fortunately President Roosevelt came to the rescue, set aside Pelican Island as a Government reservation, and installed a warden to guard it during the nesting season. Only visitors who have secured a Government permit are now allowed to land on the island.

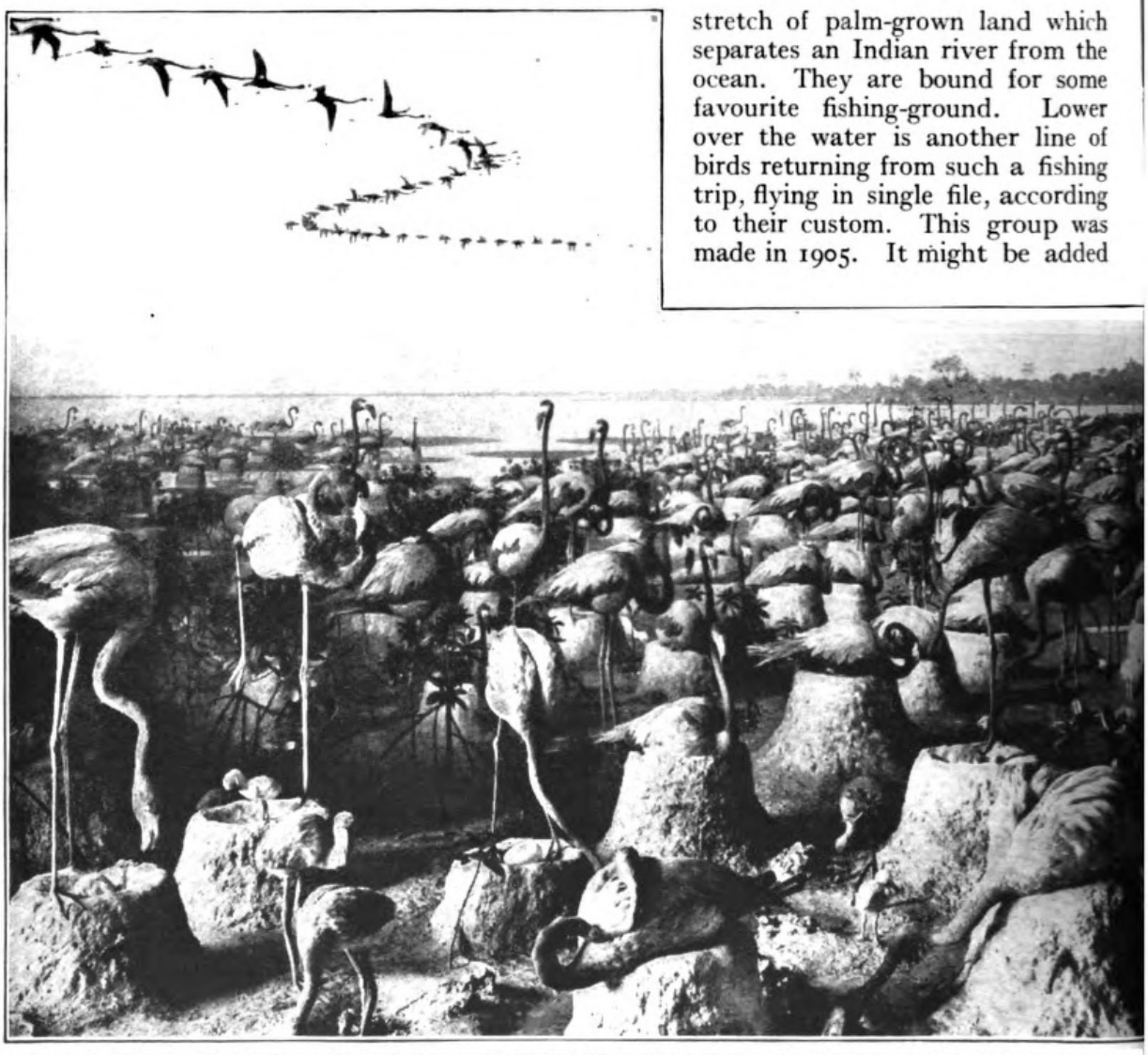


ON PELICAN ISLAND, FLORIDA.

The pelican—as the majority of readers are probably well aware—is a rather remarkable bird. For one thing, he is born "without a stitch on," and, moreover, for ten days he develops no clothes whatever. At the end of that time, however, a downy plumage begins to appear which rapidly changes the black-coloured scarecrow of a bird into a beautiful creature of snowy whiteness. This in turn changes to a soft brown, and at the age of about two months the plumage is fully developed.

The baby pelicans are fed on predigested fish kindly supplied by the parent, the young birds—sometimes three at a time—eagerly

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NO. 3.—A COLONY OF NESTING FLAMINGOS — THIS GROUP IS AN ACTUAL REPRODUCTION OF ONE OF THE MOST

thrusting their heads into their mother's mouth for the purpose. Afterwards the young pelicans go fishing on their own account, and frequently catch specimens of so great a size that it is impossible to swallow them whole. This, however, in no way disconcerts the intelligent bird, who swallows as much of the fish as he is able and then sits down with the tail projecting from his mouth, patiently waiting for the head to digest.

This group was made at Pelican Island under the direction of Mr. Chapman, the background being by Mr. Horsfall, and the birds mounted by Mr. E. W. Smith. The group represents the island early in March, when—another curious phase of the pelican—one may see every stage of the nesting season, from the fresh egg to the bird on the wing. Although not shown in the reproduction, in the original group, high in the air, hundreds of pelicans may be seen flying over the narrow stretch of palm-grown land which separates an Indian river from the ocean. They are bound for some favourite fishing-ground. Lower over the water is another line of birds returning from such a fishing trip, flying in single file, according to their custom. This group was made in 1905. It might be added that the water in these groups is represented by celluloid, cleverly tinted to the exact shade and fashioned with a "ripple" which increases the illusion.

In the group representing a colony of nesting flamingos (No. 3) the untravelled reader may consider there is some exaggeration—the birds being so closely grouped together as almost to jeopardize their breathing capacity. Yet there is no exaggeration at all, the group being an actual reproduction of one of the most remarkable scenes in bird-life. Studies for this group were made in the Bahamas in June, 1905, the background being by L. A. Fuertes (birds) and Carlos Hittell (landscape). The birds were mounted by Herbert Lang.

The colony of which this group is a representation consisted of over two thousand nests. "Before the studies for this group were made," explained Mr. Chapman, who is justly proud of what is regarded as the "star"

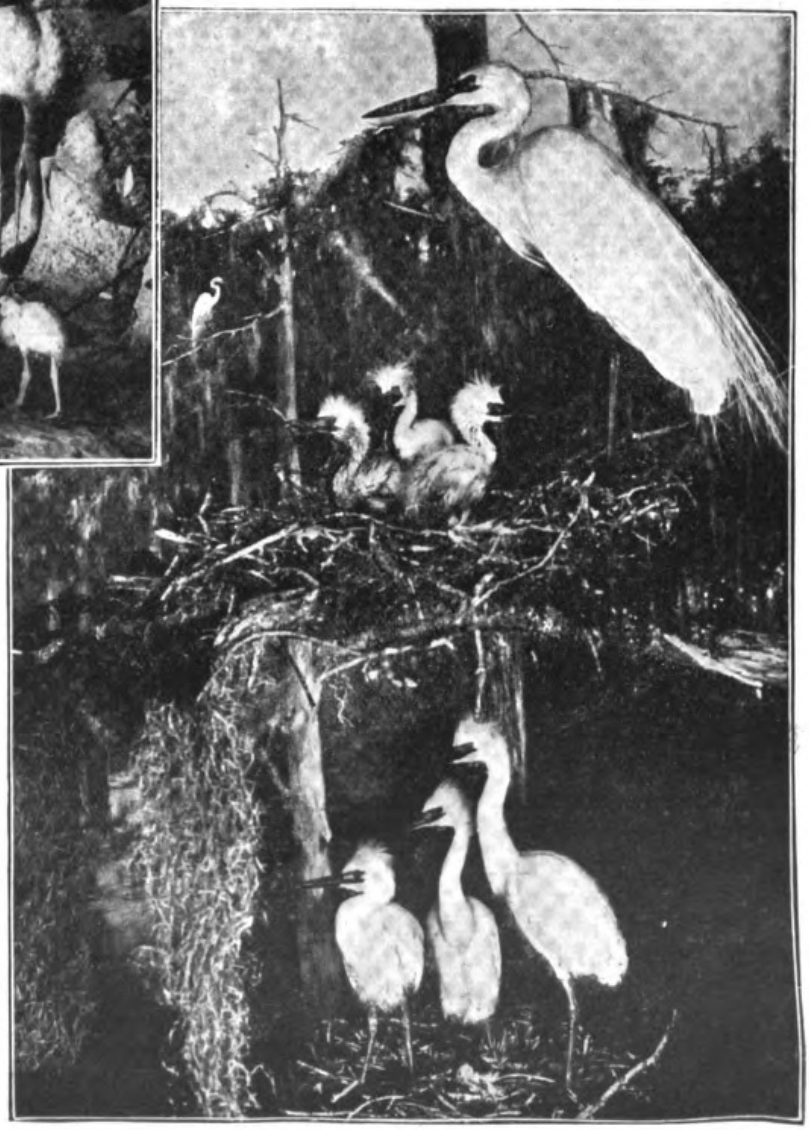
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bird-group in the Museum, "very little was known about the nesting habits of flamingos. For this reason, and because of the belief that a reproduction of a flamingo city (beyond question the most remarkable sight in the world of birds) would possess exceptional interest, an expedition was dispatched to the Bahamas in 1902 to find flamingos on their nesting grounds. It was unsuccessful; but in 1904 the search was resumed, and on this occasion the birds were discovered, and from an artificial blind, concealed in the very heart of their rookery, containing two thousand birds, a series of unique photographs and observations was made."



REMARKABLE SCENES IN BIRD-LIFE.

If the reader will examine this group carefully he will find that almost every bird has a different pose. This was not done according to the whim of Mr. Lang, who mounted them, but was based on photographs made from a blind hidden in a bush in the very centre of the colony. The birds were photographed separately and together, the observations being made during May and June, which is the nesting season. The flamingo may be regarded as a very practical architect and builder, constructing his nest, as he does, by scooping up mud and patting it down with bill and feet. The nests are raised to a height of from eight to fourteen inches—according to the exalted ideas of the builder—the main object being to protect the inhabitants or contents of the nests from a sudden and possibly unlooked-for rise in the water. It might be mentioned for the benefit of the reader who thirsts for ornithological knowledge that the curious shape of a flamingo's bill is due to the manner in which it hunts for its food, which consists of the small spiral cerithium shell, which the bird finds in the mud. This constant forcing of its bill into the mud has the tendency to make the point turn upwards, which is the



NO. 4.—A BEAUTIFUL GROUP REPRESENTING THE AMERICAN EGRET IN A SOUTHERN CAROLINA CYPRESS FOREST.

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real story of how the flamingo got its bill. When first born, and up to the time that it begins to forage for itself, the bill of the flamingo is quite straight.

The very beautiful group representing the American egret in a Southern Carolina cypress forest (No. 4) is one which generally exercises the greatest amount of fascination on women visitors to the Museum. And the interest appears to have grown since the American Government prohibited the importation of all egret feathers into the United States. "Anyone," Mr. Chapman affirms, "who knows how abundant the snowy 'herons' or egrets were in our Southern States twenty-five years ago will doubtless be surprised to learn that no little difficulty was experienced in finding a locality where the necessary studies could be made for an egret group. So effectively, indeed, have the plume-hunters done their work that it was feared this beautiful and fast-vanishing species could not be included among our bird-groups, when, quite by chance, a colony of egrets was heard of on a shooting preserve in South Carolina. It appears that when the land was acquired it contained a few egrets, survivors of a once-flourishing colony. The new owners rigidly protected them, and they soon began to increase, forming, at the end of seven years, a rookery which would have done credit to the days of Audubon."

When this colony was visited by Mr. Chapman and his helpers it was found that the nests of the egrets were in cypresses at an average height of forty feet. This did not disconcert the naturalists, however, and they went to work and arranged a moss-draped blind to the limb of a tree forty-five feet above the ground. From behind this screen the birds were observed and photographed, while Mr. Horsfall made his sketches for the background also from trees in order to secure the desired effect of height.

"The plumes or 'aigrettes' for which this bird has been slaughtered by the million," Mr. Chapman stated, "are worn by both sexes. They are acquired prior to the nesting season, and constitute the birds' wedding costume. As the season advances and they become frayed and dirty, they are shed. Aigrettes are to be secured, therefore, only during the breeding season, which accounts for the surprising rapidity with which the birds have been brought to the verge of extinction. Concealed in the rookery it is a simple thing to shoot the parents as they return with food for their young, and in the early days of 'pluming' it was not unusual for a man to kill several hundred birds at a sitting. The plumes grow only from between the shoulders, where a circular cut of the knife 'scalps' the bird by removing the skin to which the forty or fifty aigrettes are attached."

A very striking group represents the duck hawk (No. 5), a near relative of the Old World peregrine falcon, which it can equal in swiftness and strength. Its speed is terrific and it can easily overhaul the swiftest flying duck, while it possesses the strength to strike and kill without any apparent effort. The duck hawk may be found in the vicinity of New York City, and nests on the Palisades of the Hudson. Its nests, however, are frequently rifled, so that it does not take up any permanent residence there. The duck hawk is a lazy bird so far as household accommodation is concerned, for it builds no nest, but lays its eggs on the bare rock.

The material for this group was collected by Mr. R. B. Potter on Hook Mountain, near Nyack, New York. The background, however, painted by Mr. Hobart Nichols, represents the Palisades northward from the "Gorge" at Englewood. The accessories to this group are particularly fine, and represent an infinite amount of labour and care on the part of Mr. Figgens. The birds were mounted by Mr. Lang.

Mr. C. J. Hittell, whose work in connection with these remarkable bird-groups is beyond praise, has had various experiences in making the sketches for the backgrounds. A book might be written on Mr. Hittell's personal adventures alone, but we shall content ourselves with a couple of incidents which certainly added to the excitement of his chase after "local colour." The present writer was shown a very small photograph of Mr. Hittell climbing a rope on the side of a cliff preparatory to getting into an eagle's nest, but when an attempt was made to enlarge it for reproduction the result was so poor that it had to be abandoned. The reader will, therefore, have to content himself with his own ideas of this scene.

"Early in our expedition," writes Mr. Hittell, "we went to Wyoming for sage hens and a picture of the sage-brush plains; also to find a particular eagle's nest built in an interesting region of picturesque cliffs, of which we had a photograph. This nest was said to be located in what is called 'Bates Hole,' sixty or seventy miles from the railroad. That was our only clue.

"Well, we got a rancher to take us from the nearest railroad station, Medicine Bow, in his

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'prairie schooner' to this remote region. We could see cliffs around the 'Hole' from our camp, and we managed to guess correctly the side where this nest was located. When we reached these cliffs, by diligent climbing and close observation we found the particular nest for which we had come. It was not so much the nest, of course, that I was after as its background—a splendid perpendicular cliff like a mighty fortress that jutted out against the sky and distant plains and mountains. It was, indeed, the combination of the eagle's nest and the background that was so interesting and picturesque. Another eagle's nest in plain view clung to the wall of the rock.



NO. 5.—THE DUCK HAWK BUILDS NO NEST, BUT LAYS ITS EGGS ON THE BARE ROCK.

"In making the sketch of this scene my only available position was on an incline so steep that I had to drive a spike (which I carried with me) into the slope to brace my foot against as I sat and held my sketching-board between my knees. At my back was a great wall of sandstone, almost overhanging. To add to my discomfort there was a gale blowing overhead, and it dislodged loose pieces of this rock varying in size from gravel to that of brickbats. These were constantly dropping all around me. I was struck repeatedly by small pieces, and my sketch was well dusted several times. Larger rocks fell dangerously close to my head. I could not watch these missiles and paint at the same time, and I could not dodge, so I trusted to luck and worked away until my sketch was finished, although by that time I was trembling from the mental and physical strain. A ride to camp on an uncertain ranch-horse not used to cumbersome baggage and tubes rattling in a paint-box, which distressed him not a little, was made without incident, but the rancher expressed himself as being much relieved when he saw me ride safely into camp.

"The next thing to be had after the picture of the nest and the home of the eagle was an actual nest, or at least the material of a nest. Our rancher said he knew of a couple not far

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from his home; so upon our return to the ranch-house we started out with a team of horses hitched to a two-wheeled cart with a large wagon bed. We carried about seventy-five feet or so of halter rope, a chain, and a long pole. The idea was to prise off the nest, or part of it, from the rock after climbing to the top. The nest we chose was built against the sheer side of a great cliff about a hundred feet high, and what looked to us to be about twelve or fifteen feet from the top; but we found that this latter distance was almost twice as great. The pole was useless. I volunteered to tie the rope above and climb down into the nest. I fastened one end of the rope to a boulder, secured it, and threw the other end over the cliff. We could not see the nest from above; but Mr. Chapman, who remained below with his camera, called out to us in which direction to shift the rope so that it would hang directly in front of the nest. The rock overhung a little, so that the rope swung clear. When we had its correct position fixed I tied the other end around my waist, and, taking a firm hold above, I leaned over and looked below. The nest was in sight and in a line with the rope, so I swung off and let myself down, hand under hand, until I reached it. I was surprised at its great size, for as I sat in the nest with my back against the cliff to which it was attached, and stretched out my legs in front of me, my feet did not reach to the outer edge. The twigs and branches which composed it were interlaced in a wonderful manner. Eagle feathers and bones of small animals lay about. The twigs were so strongly interwoven, indeed, that I had great difficulty in tearing loose a number of these with one hand, while I partly supported my weight with the other hand on the rope, as I did not know whether the nest was sufficiently secure against the rock to bear me.

"Then I started to climb out, but my hands were slipping; the rope was too thin for a safe hold of this kind, and I slid back into the nest. The rope was too short to reach the bottom of the cliff or I might have slid down to safety, so my only hope was to climb. I spat on my hands and, seizing the rope again, with a fixed determination to 'do or die,' I went up, hand over hand, climbing steadily, for I knew my life depended on keeping a cool head. Although my hands kept slipping I continued to gain until I reached a point where the rope lay against the rock. Here I managed to relieve some of the strain by getting as great a surface of my body against the cliff as possible, where I rested for a breathing spell while I still clutched the rope like a drowning man. Then, with another desperate pull—it seemed the last that was in me—I climbed or squirmed a little higher, when the rancher reached over, grasped my hand, and helped to swing me up out of danger. 'Good boy,' he shouted, as he slapped me on the back; 'I wouldn't have tried that for ten thousand dollars.'

"When we descended to the place below the nest to pick up the specimen branches that I had thrown over, we found about a couple of wagon-loads of other branches that had fallen from the nest from time to time. Some of these twigs and branches were so decayed and weather-beaten by time and exposure that they might have lain there a great many years. The eagles evidently kept this nest in thorough repair, and after we left I was told that they set to work again and had their 'house in order' a week or two later. In fact, this nest must have been the home of many generations of eagles, and may have been originally constructed centuries ago. Fortunately for me, the eagles were not at home when I called! We took home a cart-load of specimen branches, which now form the nest in the group of the golden eagle in the Natural History Museum."

In the confined space of a single article it is impossible to refer in detail to every bird-group contained in this remarkable series at the American Museum of Natural History. Many have been omitted which perhaps are quite as interesting and beautiful as those referred to. But reams of description could not convey any adequate idea of the marvellous fidelity of these groups to Nature herself, and they must be seen to be appreciated. Any reader who visits New York may omit from his sight-seeing the Brooklyn Bridge, the Statue of Liberty, the Grand Central Station, the Tombs, or anything else equally famous, and the loss to him will not be half so great as if he failed to visit these wonderful "Habitat Groups" in the Natural History Museum.

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# The DANCING FAUN

by MORLEY ROBERTS

*Illustrated By* FRANK GILLETT R.I.

HIS wife was John Guest's sole and single adventure; she resembled no other woman he had ever seen. She belonged to a class that was lower than his own. He knew something of her father and wished to know no more. It was an understood thing between him and Pauline that she gave up her family when she married him. He never spoke of them, nor did she. In exchange he gave her much, or so he thought: a big house, wealth, and the satisfaction of all reasonable desires save those of offspring. She was a strange creature, and he knew it. Sometimes he said to himself with a sigh:—

"I understand Kant's 'Critique of Pure Reason' a great deal better than I do Pauline."

He grew content not to know her. He never wondered if he knew himself. He was content to let her be what she was, and what she would be. He accepted the days in which she was his friend, the days in which she was inscrutably sphinx-like, and at last the days in which she said that she hated him and England. She used to say that if she did not get away she should commit suicide. He let her go. These attacks came on in the spring; she grew fearfully restless. In the old days he had heard that her father was the same. He had worked for three months, and worked furiously; but the rest of the year he had been an idler and a parasite.

Certainly Pauline was like him, essentially an artist. She painted well, but rarely painted in England. Most of her work was done in Paris when she left him for two months, and there she worked hard. She shared a studio with a friend. For the rest of the year she took little interest in any art; she became somnolent, almost sluggish. She was tall and fair, with strangely sleepy eyes. Folks said she was fascinating, others that she was sensual. She had great colouring, red lips; her hair was gold and honey.

There was some strangeness in her blood to make her paint as she did. There was notable wildness in all she drew, something devilish, something *macabre*. All her work showed what a Puritan critic might have called the spirit of evil. Yet to all appearances she accepted what others did as she accepted the life of London; as she accepted her husband. She had no real friends, and did not need them. She lived much in her own room. Save for a bookcase which held nothing but a few French and Italian books this room was Oriental in character. There was a beautiful coloured lamp in it; it had low couches and a silken Persian carpet. On a pedestal stood a marble copy of the Dancing Faun. She said that she loved and hated it. It represents, more fully than any work of art that exists, the very joy of life. Though he is strangely a creature of the earth he barely touches it with his moving feet. He lifts his hands to the unseen birds and seems to call them.

"I love him in the spring," said Pauline. "I could dance with him, too."

There was no division in him, no regret, no thought or fear of death, no hope of heaven, or of any paradise other than that of the translucent, ambient air, the shining, singing waters, the sunlight that was a song. Long, long years ago he danced before his happy

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maker; and still he dances as the great procession passes him with bowed heads—those that hear not the birds, nor the song of the wind, nor the music of the rhythmic waters.

"I love him in the spring," said Pauline Guest, "when my own blood moves. He is so fine, so strong. His hair is a kind of rude crown. He's beautifully ugly—so rough, and so clean. His very hand calls out and dances. And even his little tail behind is so sweet—so sweet! And—he's dangerous!"

But John Guest shook his head and looked puzzled, and said:—

"Well, well, my dear Pauline, if you like it that's all right, but I must say I prefer the front view. The tail gives me a shiver."

The truth is that he was a Puritan who ought to have married what he understood. It was a perpetual wonder to him that he had achieved Pauline. He had something not unlike doubts as to the morality of his marriage; there was something pagan in her. She was voluptuous, cryptic, unintelligible. It was as if he had uttered some uncomprehended spell and had been endowed by Fate with a creature half a witch and half an odalisque. Apparently she loved him, but he could never be sure.

"My dear John, I am sometimes two people," she said, "or even more."

The odd thing was that folks said she actually had a double, a strange woman who was a dancer, a Madame Darya. Some said she was a Russian, but others had it that she was Italian or Spanish. She played upon her public and remained a mystery. She never danced save in the spring. During the spring she appeared in Paris, in Vienna, in St. Petersburg, in Budapest, or as far east as Bucharest. During these months the world heard of her, then she was lost. Report attributed to her many lovers.

Pauline Guest knew all about her, or all that people said. She brought home a photograph from Paris and showed it to her husband. He found the likeness strange, and yet he denied that it was really like. There was no sleepy luxury about her, no restfulness. Pauline rarely spoke of her, although she owned that she had seen her, and all her acquaintances who knew of this strange likeness wondered she took so little apparent interest in her double. She shrugged her shoulders.

"Doesn't one hate to have a double in the world? But if she's like me perhaps she dances for me. Is that an odd thing to say? Perhaps she leads the quietest life all the rest of the year. Inside she must be *very* like me."

"That may be so," said her husband, who was then with her. "Perhaps she goes away into some quiet place, and looks after her children and some dull dog of a husband."

And Pauline sighed.

"They say she has no children."

And Pauline had none either.

They had this talk in the winter, but when spring was in the air she was once more restless and uneasy. The sleepy look went out of her eyes; she grew more alert, her temper was fiery. Her maid was sometimes found in tears. Then her mistress petted her and gave her presents, and said:—

"For Heaven's sake stop crying or I'll beat you. Take this dress—you'll look quite pretty in it. If you cry I'll have you thrown out of the house."

Her husband tried to occupy her, to fill her mind. He did not like her going abroad, even to her friend, although he knew she worked so hard.

"In the spring I'm mad, John, and you know it," she said.

She did not remind him of what folks had said of her own family—that they all grew mad in the springtime. She became an impossible wife. She rose early in the morning and walked in the Park, a thing she did at no other season. But at last she went to him.

"John, I must go to Paris," she said. "I'm unendurable to myself, and shall presently be more than unendurable to you. You must let me go."

That night she spoke to the Dancing Faun upon his pedestal.

"Now I understand you again," she said, "you strange wild man of the woods, of the ancient forests, you creature of pure joy. I understand you and—others."

For was he not the companion of wild birds and beasts; a heavenly, earthy creature of joy; some lesser Dionysus?

Early next morning she roused her sleeping maid and, dragging the girl into her room, bade her pack for Paris. Before her husband was up she and the maid were out of town. She did not even bid him good-bye, but left a letter for him. As he read it he sighed—he seemed to understand a little. He knew that he had married an artist, and had to endure it. He did not understand, and yet deep within himself he felt capable of understanding. Perhaps there was that within himself which some day might comprehend what Pauline understood when Pan blew his marvellous pipes when the Faun danced and fluted magically.

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She wrote to him from Paris and told him that she was working. In her postscript she said: "Next week my double dances. I shall see her again. You'd hate her—I'm sure you'd hate her."

And the next week Madame Darya came to Paris. She had a greater success than ever; the theatre in which she danced was packed nightly. The world talked of her. But the success was not all her own; there was a strange element in it which was life, not art. He who danced with her during the last three years was a notable wild creature from Eastern Europe. Some said he was a gipsy, some an Italian; others said he came from the eastern shores of the Adriatic. He was the Dancing Faun reincarnated; living bronze, a live creature of joy. He was strangely ugly, with the ugliness of the Neapolitan Faun himself; but his figure was more splendid, more powerful, and yet as light.

It was said that now he loved the woman he danced with, and that this love had come to him suddenly—that the woman had provoked it. Before then he had seemed strange and soulless, a creature who was flesh and spirit and yet untainted with human passion, not knowing its tortures. He had danced with her as though she were no mate of his, though in many of their dances there had been the passion of the earth-woman for something immortal and above her. It was she who had shown passion and had sought him, pursuing him in forests at sun-dawn, in the deep blue nights of mountains, in blinding baths of changing colours. Till lately he had been a lesser god who stood above the passions of the earth, the youthful, pursued male, unconquered and chaste. But now people watched them with bated breath and spoke in whispers. When the curtain rose upon them to the bird-call of a solitary flute there was an expectation as of high tragedy.

They said the gipsy and the Faun had at last become a man and a lover; though some declared that it was but art, a thing fashioned to make a new appeal. Now it was he who pursued. In her were the beauty and power of her sex, and yet a great fear and high reluctance. For all the passion of her feet and limbs and body she had a powerful and virginal air—triumphant and sometimes terrifying. Hers seemed an unsunned chastity, and she was the more mysterious. Many men who saw in her the romance and tragedy of passion gave her their hearts, and women flocked to see her that they might surprise her secret.

The power of tragedy grew about her and about him who was her companion. Each night the atmosphere grew tenser. Those who had come once came again; those who had never come came now. There was the expectation of death in the theatre, so that the great house seemed to sigh. And the fuller he grew of passion the more aloof was she, even though they were locked together in the high passion of the dance. He lifted her at last in his powerful arms and bore her off the stage. When they came back to receive the applause of the house which rose to them she was strangely white. It seemed that the Faun reeled and bowed his head that he had held so high. Folks said at last that she was afraid.

Pauline sent some pictures to her husband in London, and wrote to him:—

"I am working hard, very hard. I have sent you to-day a sketch of Madame Darya, and one of the Dancing Faun, the man with whom she dances. You would know him—he is the living picture of the Faun that is in my room. You've often wished to see her, so you say—you will be able to see her now. They tell me she is to dance for a week in London very soon. They're paying her tremendously. I think you'll hate her, because she's like me. I shall be back soon. I think I've done enough."

She put in a postscript, "Don't go and see Madame Darya. I think I'd like you not to see her. You'd think it horrible."

She came back from Paris exhausted, as white as though she had been bled, as though she had lived out of the sun, as though she had spent herself utterly. Her husband found her aloof, reserved, and fretful. She was not herself. She seemed nervous and agitated. They spoke of Madame Darya, and Pauline for once talked of her almost freely.

"You saw her again?" asked her husband.

She nodded.

"Oh, yes; I saw her."

"Do you still think she's like you?"

"Oh, yes—of course she is," said Pauline. "You wouldn't be pleased. Don't go and see her, John—I'd hate you to see her. And now I hate the man they call the Dancing Faun. He's strange and dangerous — a madman."

"A madman?" asked her husband.

"He's mad about her," said Pauline; "quite mad. She fears him. He is but a wandering gipsy—but I'm sorry for him. He used to be so joyous—but now he loves her."

"And she—is she his mistress?" asked her husband.

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"HE LIFTED HER AT LAST IN HIS POWERFUL ARMS AND BORE HER OFF THE STAGE."

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Pauline shook her head.

"No, no," she said. "That's not true—I'm sure it's not true. He's too unhappy. They say that he loved somebody else, and that—this woman tried to get him away. And now she has succeeded she hates him—people say so—and fears him."

"Is he that kind of man?" asked John Guest. "The sort she might fear?"

Pauline nodded again.

"Now he is a devil," she said. "He's a creature without a soul. Perhaps his body is his soul. If you could think of the Dancing Faun in bronze with all the joy gone out of him you'd see him. He doesn't call to the birds any more, John. I'm—I'm very sorry for him. They do not come now and alight upon his uplifted fingers. Once they did—so folks say—really. He doesn't look at the birds now; all he wants is this—woman. It's very dreadful. When I saw them he was like a dancing death. The house seemed appalled. I heard the whole theatre sigh. It seemed to them as though they must leap upon the stage and stop him before he killed her. She fainted—they say so—in her dressing-room, and he cried outside her locked door like a child. I think she must be sorry now—but I believe she'd do it again. It's in her blood—in the springtime."

"Then she has no lover?" asked John Guest.

"No," said Pauline, "I don't believe it."

"And what does she do when she doesn't dance?" asked John.

"They say she never tells anyone where she lives or what she does—not even those who are nearest to her," said Pauline.

"She has relatives?" asked her husband.

"They say so," said Pauline.

The next week the dancer appeared in London. Her story, and the story of the Dancing Faun, came before her. Together and separately they flamed on posters. He was the Dancing Faun himself, nude save for a leopard skin. Each muscle showed itself: he seemed about to leap, to run, to dance. But the artist who had drawn him had somehow put a human, tortured soul into the rude, rough face of this living child of the earth who had sprung anew out of the soil of Greece or some far Eastern country. There was tragedy about him, and fear, and the beginnings of painful thought; for of these things, and of love, is made the soul of man.

And she was wonderful—a whirl of flame and fire against a deep, dark background. Her head stood out against some colour that was the colour of infinity. It was done with power and yet with subtlety, so that those who beheld could read into it what strange things they would. She attracted and repelled many very strangely. She was a success before she danced, for the whole world spoke of her—not only the little world which calls itself such, but all London, which is many worlds. Pauline's friends came to her and asked her to go to the theatre with them. She refused.

"I have seen her," she said. "When I go I shall go alone. I am jealous of her. At times I think I could have done what she does—there's something hateful in not being wholly oneself. Yes, she is very like me, and I will not go with you."

John Guest refused to admit a likeness between his wife and this dancing woman of the theatre, and yet he knew there was a great likeness. It seemed an outrage to him; it hinted at the strange possibilities that there might be in Pauline. He dreaded the passions of others, and the passions that were his own. He feared the nature of man, and his own nature. And yet this creature of the theatre, this woman of the posters, strangely attracted him. He desired to see her, for it was such a creature as this that his secret heart—the heart of the natural man—desired. Pauline, save for her stormy part of the year, in which he did not see her, was very quiet. He believed in her affection. She had beauty and great qualities. She was sweet, most reasonable. These things he had desired in his wife, and against his expectation and his fear of her heredity had found them, and found them not sufficient. He had not been paid his price. Something told him that if she had been different he, too, would have been other than he was—able to realize the ideals of all men's hearts that lead towards self-realization. He had not accomplished himself. Through passion and great love this can come. It comes in no other way.

"I must see this woman," said John Guest.

Many times he walked past the theatre in which she was to appear and saw that face lifted above him. It was Pauline, but another Pauline; alien, strong, inscrutable, and most alive; a creature of snow and fire, of flesh that was ice and flame; a being capable of all things, of all joys, of all sufferings. He felt strange passions stir within him as he looked upon her. For the night on which she appeared he bought a solitary seat at a fourfold price, and he did not desire that his wife should go with him. But indeed she would not go, and seemed troubled. She



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said it was because a friend of hers was very ill and might die.

"No, you don't know her," said Pauline; "but she wants me. I must be with her. She is afraid—afraid of death. I shall be with her every night this week. I, too, am afraid."

The Cosmopolitan Theatre that night was packed from the floor to the ceiling. There was not a vacant seat in the house, and many had been sold and resold, and bought again by those who had sold them as passion grew to see the dancer, when any night might yield a tragedy.

Guest never remembered what performance preceded the dance—if any came before it but some strange music. He was not a musician, but he felt it, and felt it deeply. Yet there was something in much that the orchestra played which revolted him. It was the essence of revolt itself, luxurious and maddening; music that was Russian and half Oriental, such as Balakhireff or Glazounow might have written. The Puritan strain in Guest's mind made him uneasy and angry as he heard it. He understood vaguely the call it made to the deep underlying instincts of man, to the emotions that are the voice of his instincts. It was a summons and a challenge: a summons to the unspoilt heart, a challenge to such as held beliefs which look beyond death. He waited eagerly and with strange shrinking what she would be or do, she who was so like the dear woman of his house.

The prelude died down at last in no crash of barbaric chords, but in a somnolent wail like the cry of the child who yields reluctant to the night. And then the curtain rose upon a darkened stage—in which he saw presently the court of some palace, gigantic, Mycenæan. Through its mighty pillars and past its carven monsters showed the deep blue of a tropic night, with the far hint of a desert, or of still waters. The house was utterly silent; it seemed as if none breathed.

Then the dancer came upon the stage, clad in dark blue with silver stars upon her robe. With a torch she lighted cresset after cresset that flamed in strange colours, and she danced a solitary dance. Guest saw even then by her motions that she was strangely like Pauline, but what she danced, or how she danced it, he did not know. He heard people sigh, even as he himself sighed; it was like the sound of a low wind. She moved with a strange and mighty authority. Her dignity was tremendous, it was inspiring, it was magical and subduing. Why he felt it, or how he felt it, he did not know, and yet in Guest's heart there was a great expectation as though the monuments among which she moved would very presently crumble into dust. She was the things that are, that presently shall not be; the things that were, and are not; the things that shall be, and soon shall be no more. He felt the bitter evanescence of all things, and knew that his deepest thoughts and highest affections were but the vain motions of a day, of an hour, of a moment.

And presently as the dancer moved, the light died down into one gleam that was faint rose upon her face. She stood at last with her robes gathered about her so that her stars were hidden, and was only a disembodied spirit, with all the rest deep blackness. And in her smile there was something strange and bitter, like the smile of human death. The light faded, and he still saw her, and wondered, and half-rose from his seat, as many did beside him. And then she smiled, and the light went out utterly.

He heard the thunder of other people's applause but did not lay one hand to another. He felt himself tremble, he shook all over. He heard fools say even as they ceased applauding, "What does it mean? Did you think her beautiful?"

But she was very beautiful, and the meaning of it shook his soul.

By some strange motion of his mind her likeness to Pauline gave him peculiar rights. Even before he saw the man who danced with her he was outraged by the thought that any danced with her. Until the curtain rose on the next scene he could not conceive her in dances other than those which were symbolical of the great things of time. He wondered what the next dance would be, the dance they called "The Awakening." This was the dance in which people feared for the dancer, and came lightly to see her run some monstrous and terrible risk.

And then the curtain rose and he saw the Faun, the Faun of marble that stood upon the pedestal beneath the coloured lamp in his wife's room. Now he was alive, a man, or some strange god or demigod; a creature of the woodlands who piped on a strange pipe and was brother to the birds and beasts, a child of the dear earth, a friend of the winds and the singing waters. He was powerful, lithe, muscular. There was a strange and rude ugliness about him, the same incult aspect that the statue showed. He was not human, he had no soul. He seemed untouched and untroubled by passion. There was

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something malely virginal about him, for that was his art and the part he played. Guest tried in vain to discover within him any signs of the passion that people saw was his. But then he knew they called the dance "The Awakening." Perhaps he had not wakened yet. It might be that he waked nightly, ever with new surprise, to the terror and passion of human love.

He saw him lifting his hand, though he was still silent, to the birds of the air, to the winds and the waters. And then he piped a beautiful little soulless song and lay down and slept upon the earth, as though the live creature which lay prone upon the dust knew he was brother to the clay beneath him. And she who was a woman, not one of his friends the dryads or wild oreads from the peaks of Olympus or Hymettus, came in to him and found him sleeping. She was a woman, hardly more than a girl, so young she looked —as young as Pauline when Guest had married her, as young as when he met her first in her strange loneliness and bore down her youthful, innocent opposition to his love.

"I never waked her," said John Guest, and his heart within him was a dull pain.

But the creature on the stage was all awake and alive. She knelt beside the sleeping Faun and stole his flute and piped to him as he slept. The scene might have come out of Theocritus of Syracuse; Virgil or a greater might have written it. And at last the Faun woke and heard—not wild fluting like his own, but her arresting music. It was another measure, something luring and passionate, luxurious and of the senses, full of passion and sunlight and fierce ardour. He knew the moods of the oreads and hamadryads, those mystic creatures of half-immortality, but this, it seemed, was his first sight of a woman, a creature of earth, something more alluring than the daughters of the gods. He looked at her with a great surprise, perceiving things within her that the immortals had not. She was the earth-passion incarnate: coy and enticing, reluctant yet unreluctant. And even as she played upon him like a pipe those who saw him felt she was the woman who knows all things; while the Faun was the male, a youth, a child, virginal, and wildly shy. She mocked his innocence with strange learned eyes, and drew him to his feet, and left him, and he followed; and then she came back to him boldly, and yet with strange meekness that was like a mask. And she smiled subtly.

He who knew the creatures of the high peaks and the woodlands had yet learnt nothing. She made herself his teacher. She taught him to dance, and gave him part of her own passion, and he drank of the cup she offered with a passionate reluctance which was easy to break and bear down. In his fantastic wild surprise there was an element of fear, and of knowledge that all he bought that hour would be paid for to the utmost. Though she gave him a soul she sapped the life out of him and used it, and he perceived no more the eternal mockery which was hers.

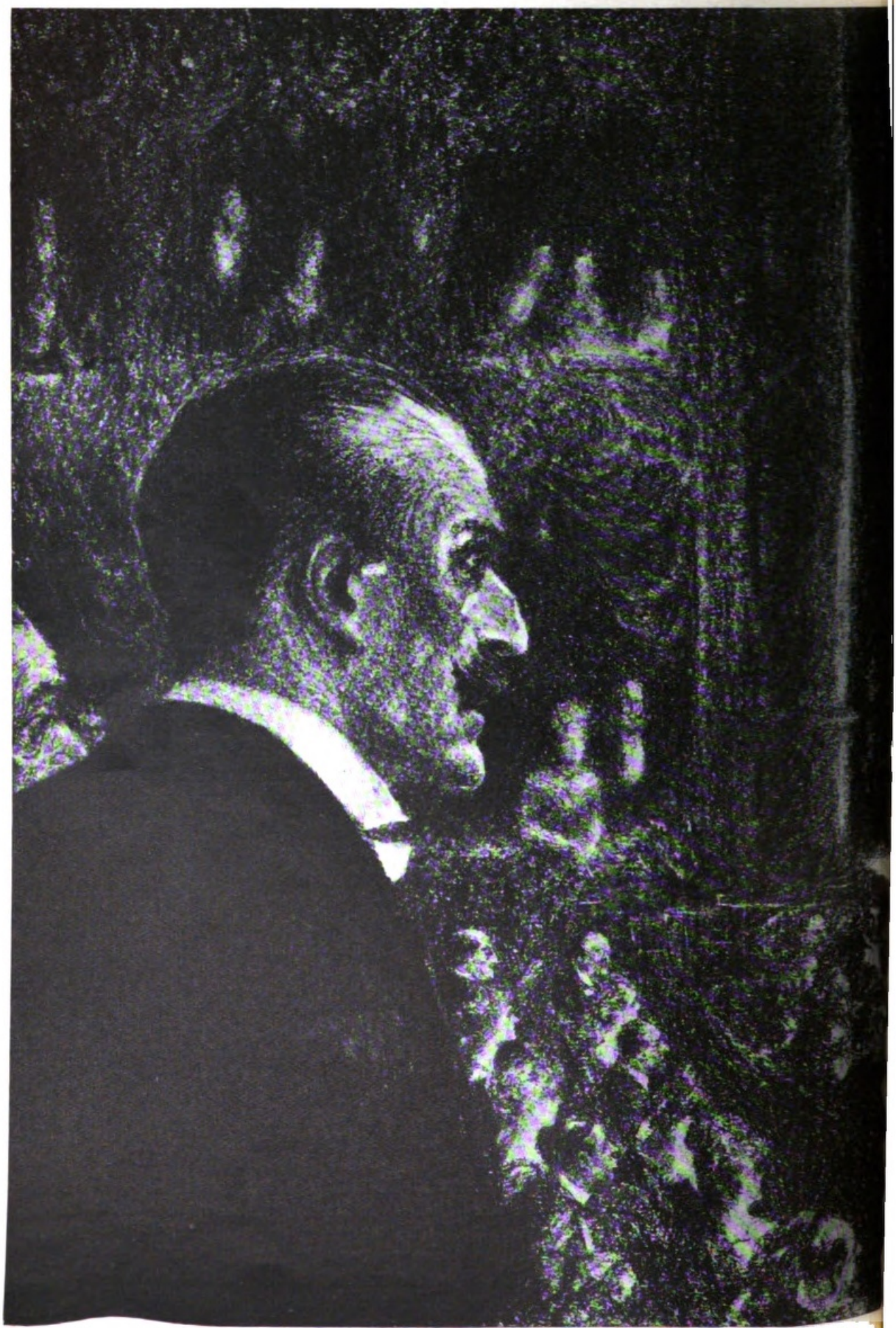
And so they danced. To Guest it was as if Pauline danced with a strange creature become a man. He saw his very wife in the arms of a wild lover, the offspring of the woods and streams and fields, a thing abhorrent when it waked to passion. Moment by moment he perceived what folks meant when they said the dancer whirled upon the very edge of death. The mask of innocence upon the Faun faded from him. He understood the call she made, though it may be he understood not her purpose or the purpose of the world itself. Heretofore it had had no purpose, it was sweet and simple and joyous; now it was terrible and dear. And the dance became a whirlwind of passion. Some said it was horrible, and most immoral, but even those who said so felt the beauty and the pain in every love.

The lights changed from daylight to a strange evening, and to the deep blue of a tropic night, until at last the dancers were lapped in overmastering darkness, and out of a great silence there came a bitter cry, which was the sound and sign of the climax of the dance. And the hearts of those who heard stayed within them, for it was like the cry of death, or the cry of a strange new life. Then there was silence and a darkness that could be felt, and they seemed to hear her sob. And many understood, and many did not understand. But when the lights came back the whole house rose and saw the dancer on her knees with her face hidden, and the Faun had his hand upon her neck.

John Guest did not know how he left the theatre or reached his home. The house emptied when the dance ended. People talked in low voices as if they were afraid, not only for her but for themselves. The skirts of awful chance had brushed them; they knew what was in them, whether it still lived, or whether they had slain it; and they knew the great romance was love and death.

Guest had an odd reluctance to see his wife, a reluctance that he understood, and did not understand. For he, too, had had his awakening. The world itself as he knew it

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"AND SO THEY DANCED. TO GUEST IT WAS AS IF PAULINE

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DANCED WITH A STRANGE CREATURE BECOME A MAN."

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was dust and ashes; it tasted as if it was a poor and evil thing. It seemed to him he had missed the greatest, even as Pauline had; but that the dancer knew it, and that the Faun knew it, and that though death were the end it was a great thing to know.

When he got home he found his wife had come in a little before him. He went to her room with a certain odd uneasiness. She lacked something. He was still under the influence of romance, the romance that he would have scorned in other days. But at last he went into her room and found her on the couch. Save for the glow of the fire and one shaded lamp above the Dancing Faun the room was in darkness. He did not kiss his wife, but put his hand upon her hair. She seemed very weary, and yet there was an odd eagerness in her voice when she spoke.

"Have you seen her?" she asked.

"Yes, I've seen her," he replied.

"Do you think her like me, John?"

"She's like, but different. She's—very wonderful."

"You saw the man she dances with?" asked Pauline.

He sat down by the fire.

"Yes, I saw him," said John Guest. "He's mad about her—mad!"

There was a long silence.

"How did you find your friend—the woman you went to see?" asked her husband, presently.

It seemed to him that Pauline shivered. There was a strange alteration in her voice.

"They say she is still in danger," said Pauline.

"I'm sorry," said her husband. "Do you think it good for you to see her?"

"I must—she needs me," said his wife. "Tell me—what do you think of this Dancing Faun? Did you really think him mad?"

"She's maddening him. What they say is true," he answered. "No wonder—no wonder! She's very strange—and like you. But you are not like her."

"I think I understand," said Pauline. "Yes, I think I understand what you mean."

That night it took a long time for him to go to sleep, and even when he did sleep at last he woke presently with a start. He felt sure that he had heard Pauline moving in the next room, and yet when he sat up in bed he heard nothing. Presently he rose, and something drew him downstairs. He found his wife's sitting-room door ajar. He thought he heard her speak. He pushed the door open and saw the little lamp above the Faun was lighted. Pauline was standing in front of the statue. She spoke, and uttered strange words.

"You—you murderer!" she said.

And Guest did not understand, but he was afraid to speak to her, and went back to his own room. Deep behind his conscious mind he wondered and drew conclusions. They were not stated for him, but still they grew, for that is the way the mind works. He knew now that he, too, hated the Faun. This woman was like his wife, so like—and this dancing madman, this creature of the stage, loved her. He felt she was all that the wild nature of man desired. If only Pauline had been like that! He remembered the ways of the dancer; they were like those of his wife, but bigger, more significant. He hungered after nature; he perceived the woman's loosed passion. She was built up of strange, interacting, hostile emotions: love and hate and joy and pity. She was cruel; she was kind. If only Pauline had been like that! But he knew deep within him that she was like it, only she had never had her awakening. He had never waked her—he himself had never waked till now.

He felt the unknown surging in him. He began to read his own script, to see that he was like a palimpsest, an ancient manuscript rubbed out and then inscribed again with some later and unnatural scripture. In this strange bath of passion he seemed to read the underwriting that told him what he really was.

The next night he could get no seat to see the performance. He walked the streets instead, and found himself continually returning to the theatre in which this woman played who had stolen his soul. But no, she had not stolen it; she had given him one. He knew that all his training had been the denial of life, its suppression, its destruction. If Pauline had been like this woman he would have never let her go abroad alone. He had always been so sure of her. He wondered now if with great love and passion at its highest there was any security. Even in the most noble there is the bitter abiding jealousy of death.

"Till now I was never myself," said Guest, "and she, perhaps, is not herself. I never waked her."

That was true, but was it not even possible that someone had? He walked home across the Park and struck out from the path on to the grass. And suddenly, like a thunderclap, it came to him. He seemed to know. The whole world fell about him with a crash; he felt stunned. It was possible; it was impossible. It was true; it was a damnable

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lie. It could not be; and, by Heaven, it was! This alien woman of the theatre and the stage, this incarnate passion, was no alien. She was Pauline, the wife of his bosom!

She did not love him, never had loved him. Her ways with him had not been the ways of passion, for he had never called it out. Till now he himself had known neither love nor passion. He had no right to love. She had lived a suppressed life during most of the year, and then had done this, had let herself go. He remembered that as a child she had danced. He had taken away her old life, cut her off from her people, cut her off from the natural springs of her existence, of her nature; given her all he had of wealth and luxury, but had denied her a soul, denied her even the right to speak to her father, or to her who had nursed her on her heart. But now he seemed to understand. She had lied to him and had constructed a little life apart, something that helped her to live and to endure. It was a safety-valve, it might be, and yet—and yet—— What of this strange wild woman, the dancer, who piped so wildly to the sleeping Faun, to this creature with immortal capacities of passion, a creature who was still a man beneath all the robes and trappings of the theatre; a rude creature of the earth, some gipsy, native to the earth, born of it, alive, vibrant, autochthonous? It might be that she loved him, and that the story of the dance was but the art of the theatre.

An immense sorrow crushed his soul. He had never been able to inspire love, or to give her life, the life she needed. But he must speak to her, must have it out, must wrench aside all that had come between them. He wished to see her soul to soul, even if he heard the worst. He wondered whether she was now at home—whether she would come home at all. If it were as he suspected, as he feared, it might be that she would yield in a moment to the man she danced with. The Faun loved her, that was sure. Acting or no acting, bait or no bait for the public, that was certain. He had seen naked passion that was fire in the man.

And now he knew how it was that men sought their opposites, those who were far from them, that were not of their class, those that were above or below them. For all men and women alike sought some strangeness in love. House-mates rarely loved each other. When men married those they were bred with it was no case of passion; it was sentiment, contiguity, habit, and mere use. Affection dealt with habit, but passion dealt with the extreme, the unknown. It sought out and required strange, exquisite satisfactions. She had not found them in him, nor had he yet found them in her, because she had not waked to find his strangeness, nor he to find hers.

She had lived a sheltered life, as those do who bury every day some unused talent, some passion, some desire, or some sweet fear. Perhaps, if he had but known himself and her, he might have found great gifts in his wife's veiled eyes, a great glow in her, deep elemental fire. She might have had a flow of perfect will towards him and strength that made her natural gifts most beautiful. He had not had the gifts to wake her. She had sought strange and devilish satisfactions in her own natural art.

He did not see her that night, and on the pretext of affairs was out of the house before she rose. He found an enormous and insuperable difficulty in speaking. His old self was still strong in him. He had loathed the theatre and all its works; the essential Puritanism of his inherited mind worked upon him wonderfully. He could not endure the thought that the world saw her, as they could see her now, for a price. And yet he had to speak, and wondered how he should speak. He spent the day thinking, and when he returned did not know what he would say.

The moment that Pauline saw him she knew something had happened. He was very white; the lines of his face were more deeply marked. He looked at her very strangely, doubtfully; his eyes asked questions; they were an accusation. She was startled when she saw him, and, rising, went towards him.

"What is the matter with you, John?" she asked.

He almost spoke what was in his mind, and then an inspiration came to him.

"I am not well, and troubled about business. I want you to stay with me to-night. I don't want you to go out."

She raised her eyebrows suddenly. He saw her eyelids flicker.

"I can't stay, John. I'm sorry—I must go out for an hour—an hour at least."

"I ask you to stay," said her husband.

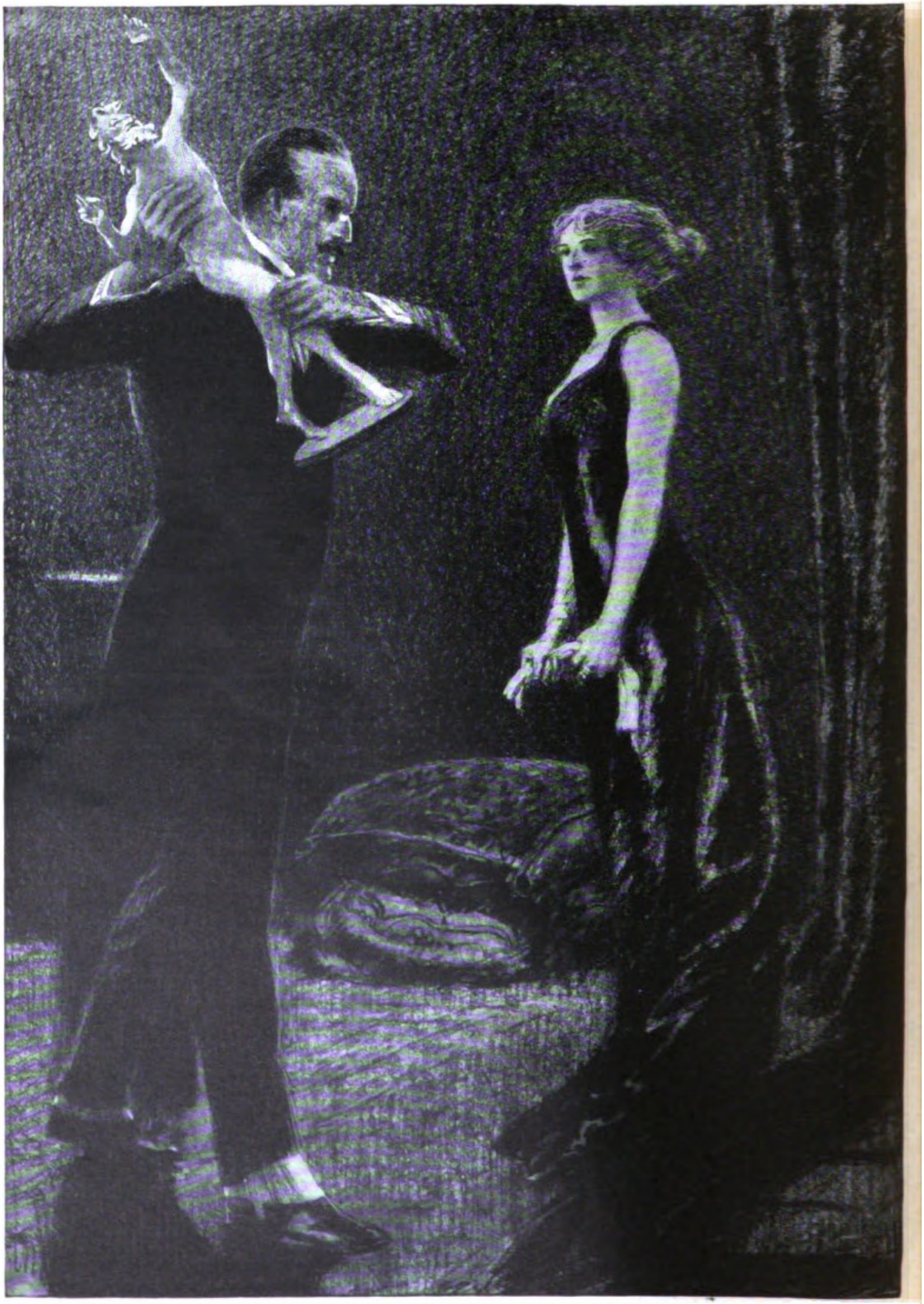
He did not watch her eyes, but her hands, and saw that she clenched them and opened them again.

"I can't do it," said Pauline.

"Can't?" asked John. "Can't? Do you understand that I tell you that I am unwell—unhappy—and that I want you to stay with me in the house this evening? You must."

"Must?" said Pauline. "You've never

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"HE WENT TO THE PEDESTAL ON WHICH THE FAUN STOOD AND PICKED IT UP."

spoken like that to me before. You don't understand—you don't understand! There's somebody I love in danger—in danger of death."

"I understand," said her husband. "I understand what you mean. But you must not go out to-night."

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"I will," said Pauline. "Understand me—I say I will. I have told you that somebody I love is in danger of death."

John Guest looked past her and saw the Faun upon his pedestal, the Faun that she danced with, the man who loved her, whom she had wrecked.

"You will be safer here," said John Guest; "much safer."

She watched his eyes, and saw him looking past her. She turned, and saw what he looked at. He was very white, and so was she. Suddenly she saw a red flush come in his cheeks, a strange look of rage.

"I'll have that thing here no longer," said John Guest.

"What thing?" asked his wife.

But he went to the pedestal on which the Faun stood, and picking it up dashed it to a thousand fragments on the hearth.

"Now do you understand?" he said.

And Pauline laughed and said, "I think I understand—I think I do understand!"

Her husband looked at her.

"You laugh," he said. "Why do you laugh?"

"I cannot tell you," said Pauline.

But he thought that she laughed because this thing was no more than marble; the man still lived.

"I am going out," said Pauline.

"I could stop you," said John.

"By force?" she asked. "Do you mean you could lock the door? You could not keep me in any prison!"

There at least love dies, and something told John Guest so. There was something magnificent in Pauline now, although she was very quiet—something as great in its own way as anything the dancer showed the world. She looked magnificent, and he was glad that she was a dancer and in his house.

"I will come with you," he said at last.

"You shall," said Pauline. "Come!"

"Remember, I shall not leave you—not for one minute," said her husband.

"You don't trust me, then?" said Pauline.

"By Heaven, I don't!" said John.

He had always trusted her, and sometimes she had hated it.

"If you wish it you shall not leave me, not for one minute," said Pauline. "You think I lied to you when I said that someone I loved was in danger. Come now, let us go."

When they went out to the car she said as she entered it:—

"Tell him to drive——"

"Where?" asked John Guest.

"To the Cosmopolitan Theatre."

And John Guest came in and sat down by her.

"You think now that you know everything?" said Pauline.

"Everything," said John Guest. "I knew it all yesterday, and all the night before. It came to me suddenly."

"And now you hate me," said Pauline.

For a little while he did not speak. There was a great conflict in him.

"No, no," said Guest. "You are my wife—I love you—I love you! And yet——"

"And yet what?" she asked.

"You have played upon me."

"I kept silence," said Pauline. "You wished it. If I could not do all you desired I have done my best."

"This tale of yours, of death and the fear of death," said John Guest, "whose fault is it? There's that man——"

She clutched at his arm. "Oh, it's dreadful—dreadful!"

"You sha'n't do this any more," said Guest.

"You think he might do what people say?" asked Pauline, and he felt her tremble as she came closer to him. He felt a shiver through her body.

"Have I not seen him?" asked Guest.

"I saw you," said Pauline. "I saw you."

"I thought you did," said her husband. "I thought you did—I thought I saw your eyes upon me. But to-night, Pauline, you shall not dance."

"No—no; I shall not dance," said Pauline, and they came to the Cosmopolitan.

There was a crowd of vehicles outside, and a throng of people, and many police; but the front of the great house was dark. Pauline looked out of the car.

"It's all dark," she cried. "It's all very dark!"

The car stopped at the rear of some vehicles near the door. A commissionaire ran to it. He spoke:—

"There will be no performance to-night, sir."

"Why not? Why not?" cried Pauline.

And Guest, too, asked, "Why not?" And Pauline caught hold of his arm and clung to it. He felt her shake.

"Something very dreadful has happened, sir," said the commissionaire. "Madame Darya was killed to-night by Raphael, the man she danced with."

"I knew it! I knew it!" cried Pauline. "She was my sister."

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# Diet and Athletics

## IN DIFFERENT TIMES AND DIFFERENT NATIONS.


By F. A. M. WEBSTER,

*Founder and Hon. Sec. Field Events Association; English Javelin-Throwing Champion* 1911; *Author of "Olympian Field Events," "The Evolution of the Olympic Games," etc.; Member of the Berlin Special Committee.*



What diet is best adapted for maintaining perfect physical fitness? This is a question of direct personal interest to everyone, and is best answered by studying the experiences of those who are forced by the necessity of their lives to keep themselves in the very pink of condition without respect to any kind of fad or crank. The following article sums up the experience of different times and nations on this subject, and leads, among other considerations, to the most interesting and important conclusion that diet based on the French system of cookery, which is almost universal among the upper classes of Europe, is the worst possible for maintaining strength and efficiency.


PERHAPS the most vexed question in athletic circles all over the world is, what should one eat and drink in training? It is, of course, an accepted fact that the art of training for any feat of an arduous nature consists of building up the body, while any physiologist will say that all the parts which compose the human frame, solids and liquids alike, are successively absorbed and deposited. It follows, therefore, that a perpetual renovation takes place, regulated by the nature of the liquids and solids absorbed and by a healthy system of exercise.

The classical reader will remember that this theory was first propounded and acted upon by Herodicus for the removal of disease and the maintenance of health. Later, in Roman days, Asclepiades


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"THE PERIOD OF THE BATTLES OF TRAFALGAR AND WATERLOO COINCIDES WITH THE ZENITH OF OUR POWER IN THE PRIZE-RING."

so perfected the theory that he practically banished the use of internal medicines from Rome. Pliny tells us that Asclepiades once declared that he would forfeit his title of physician if he ever suffered from sickness or died of anything but old age or accident; and, curiously enough, he fulfilled his promise, for he lived upwards of a century, and met his end at last by falling downstairs. His longevity is a great tribute to a proper system of dietary and exercise.

As to the actual diet used by the ancient athletæ, for many years the Greeks in training ate nothing but a certain kind of cheese, specially prepared from goats' milk. Later on a flesh diet was introduced. The Romans, in the early stages of training, utilized a vegetarian form of diet, consisting of dried figs, new cheese, and boiled grain. Later on, again, meat was added to the list, but only one sort of flesh was thought suitable, and that, curiously enough, was *pork*, an edible absolutely banned by most modern trainers. Galen most firmly maintained that pork contains far more nutriment than any other flesh food. It certainly is a very significant fact that the ancient athletæ complained that if they were forced, when in training, to live upon anything else but pork for any one meal their mental and physical forces alike were seriously impaired.

The method of cooking the pork was by roasting or broiling; boiled flesh was on no account allowed. The bread which helped out the meat was prepared without leaven.

In ancient Greece and Rome athletes were only allowed to drink pure spring water, and of that only as much as would stay their thirst, no liquid of any sort being allowed to be taken at meals, but only at such a period after as would give ample time for the digestion of the solids. Among the Roman gladiators the principal meal of the day was taken in the evening.

Let us now turn to our own system of athletic training. Probably the time of our greatest virility was at the period of the battles of Trafalgar and Waterloo, which coincides with the zenith of our power in the prize-ring. Observations of the conditions of training in the early part of the nineteenth century are therefore of great interest.

In those days lived a great walker, Captain Barclay, who is regarded as the greatest of all authorities on training. With him rests the credit of devising a really sound system of feeding for athletes. As the apparent quantity of food-stuffs taken is



"THE LONG-DISTANCE RUNNER WAS MADE TO GET UP AT FIVE IN THE MORNING."

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"BREAKFAST CONSISTED OF BEEFSTEAK OR UNDERDONE MUTTON-CHOPS, STALE BREAD, AND OLD ALE."

somewhat extraordinary, it will be as well to give some brief idea of the very strenuous course of preparation through which the pedestrians of those days passed.

In going into training the athlete had to undergo a regular course of physic, consisting of three doses of from one and a half to two ounces of Glauber's salts, with an interval of four days between the doses. After completing the course of physic the athlete entered upon a regular system of exercises.

For the purpose of this article one may take the long-distance runner's course of preparation, which consisted of covering from twenty to twenty-four miles a day, the work being split up into different distances at varying speeds. He was made to get up at five in the morning and to run half a mile at the top of his speed, this sprint being followed by a six miles' walk at a moderate pace. He then returned to his training quarters at seven for breakfast, which consisted of beefsteak or underdone mutton-chops, stale bread, and old ale. A rest was allowed after breakfast, and then another six miles' walk was undergone, which kept the athlete out until about twelve o'clock, when he again returned to his quarters. One would now expect him to enjoy a meal, but such was not the case—the athlete was put to bed without his clothes for half an hour instead. By two o'clock he was on the road again, walking another four miles. At four he returned to his quarters for dinner, which was of an exactly similar nature to his breakfast. No rest whatever was allowed after dinner, the athlete being sent straight out for a half-mile run at top speed, followed by a six-mile walk to allow him to cool off. That concluded the work, and also the feeding, for the day. At eight o'clock the athlete was compelled to retire to bed.

This unvarying routine went on day after day for three or four weeks, at the end of which time it was thought the would-be runner should be in sufficiently hard condition to allow of the strain of reducing his weight. For this purpose he was wrapped up in flannels and sent out to run four miles at the top of his speed. On returning, one pint of hot liquid was given. This was known as the "sweating liquor," and was composed of the following ingredients: One ounce of caraway seed, half an ounce of coriander seed, one ounce of root liquorice, and half an ounce of sugar candy, mixed with two bottles of cider and boiled down to one-half.

Having imbibed this mixture the athlete was put to bed in the flannels in which he ran, covered with six or eight pairs of blankets *and a feather bed*, and there he stayed for half an hour. Being by that time absolutely wet through, he was taken out, rubbed thoroughly dry, and well massaged. He was then dressed in his ordinary clothes, covered with a great-coat, and sent out for a two-mile walk at a gentle pace.

After the four-mile run and two-mile walk the athlete was now allowed the whole of a large roast fowl for breakfast. This process of sweating and feeding on fowls lasted weekly until a few days before the contest.

Dealing a little more particularly with the food of the athlete in training, it may be observed that animal diet alone was allowed, beef and mutton being preferred. The lean of fat beef cooked in steaks with very little salt, and underdone, was considered best. Beef therefore formed the staple diet, but as one dish would very soon begin to pall upon the taste, mutton, being easy of digestion, was given as a variant. The legs of fowls were also considered to be very nourishing. Meats were nearly always broiled, this method of cooking being thought to preserve the nourishing qualities in the meats better than by roasting or boiling. Veal, lamb, and pork were never allowed, while all fat and greasy substances were forbidden. Vegetables such as carrots, parsnips, and turnips were taboo, as

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being watery and difficult of digestion, and the only preparations of a vegetable nature taken by the athlete were biscuits and stale bread. Fish was not considered sufficiently nourishing to be included in the diet. Butter and cheese were also omitted, the former being considered indigestible and the latter apt to turn rancid on the stomach. The yolk of the egg was sometimes taken raw in the morning, but the white was never touched. Salt, mustard, and all condiments, with the exception of vinegar, were prohibited.

Great attention was also paid to the matter of liquors, all of which were given cold, with the exception of the "sweating liquor" just referred to. Home-brewed beer "from the wood" was considered the best drink, but for those who found malt liquor unpleasant half a pint of red wine after dinner was allowed. The quantity of liquor was strictly limited, as too much would swell the abdomen and impair the breathing. The usual allowance was three pints of beer, to be taken at breakfast and dinner, as no supper was allowed.

Water was never given alone, alcohol in the form of spirits was forbidden, broth or soup were prohibited as having a weakening effect on the stomach, but broth or gruel was occasionally given after the physic, in which case it was first boiled, allowed to cool, the fat skimmed off, and the liquid boiled again. Milk was thought to be injurious, as being likely to curdle on the stomach.

The system of dieting above described seems to have been well suited to all classes of athletes at that time, and, but for the fact that it is of too arduous a nature to appeal to the athletes of to-day, was undoubtedly good, as shown by the results attained by those who trained on it. For instance, Captain Barclay, himself the inventor of this system of training, walked a hundred and fifty miles without resting, and also a thousand miles in a thousand successive hours.



"CAPTAIN BARCLAY, THE INVENTOR OF THE SYSTEM OF TRAINING DESCRIBED, WALKED A HUNDRED AND FIFTY MILES WITHOUT RESTING."

Now as to the English system at the present day. Setting aside for one moment all ultra-special systems, such as vegetarianism, the general and accepted rule among trainers is to let their charges eat what they like in moderation so long as the food is good and wholesome. This is a very fair indication of our general slackness in athletics, for surely it stands to reason that the heavy body-building and muscle-making foods necessary to the hammer-thrower and shot-putter are not suited to the jumpers, sprinters, and hurdlers, nor will they do for the long-distance runner, who requires stamina without weight.

Suppose we divide the athletic events into three classes: A—Hammer-throwers, javelin-throwers, discus-throwers, and shot-putters; B—Jumpers, hurdlers, and sprinters; C—Long-distance runners.

Class A requires food which will give muscle and weight without diminishing the nervous energy or dulling the brain-power.

A. E. Flaxman, whom I consider to be one of the finest hammer-throwers in the world at his weight (about eleven stone), eats solid, heavy, muscle-making foods and drinks stout to increase his bulk. At the same time he takes such foods as Sanatogen and Bovril to increase his nervous energy.

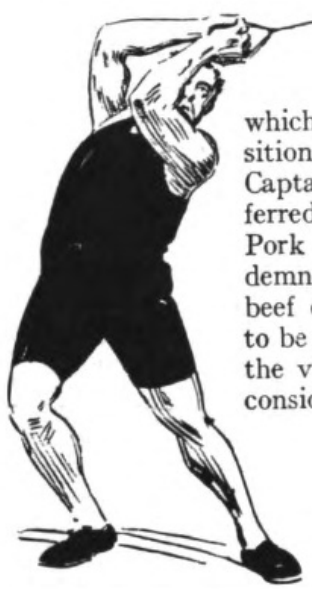
Class B requires food which builds up certain muscles to stand a sudden strain without increasing weight; therefore all substances of a fat-producing nature must be carefully avoided and the nervous energy must be kept at a high pitch.

Class C requires the most nourishing food possible to create powers of great endurance, but which will not increase the weight unduly.

Modern trainers are mostly agreed that physic of a purgative nature should be given at the commencement of training and the stomach thereafter kept clean by regular habits. Regular meals, plenty of open air, and sleep are also necessary. All food should be of the plainest and freshest and adapted to the athlete's taste; made dishes are to be sedulously avoided; ale, stout, claret, or burgundy are recommended as the liquors to be drunk. An hour or more for rest is insisted upon after meals. For the teetotaller milk or home-brewed ginger-beer is best.

Among other things which the modern

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"MUSCLE AND WEIGHT."

coach recommends is mutton in preference to beef, which is in direct opposition to the practice of Captain Barclay, who preferred beef to mutton. Pork and veal are condemned; stews made from beef or mutton are said to be good for building up the vitality. Poultry is considered good and oatmeal porridge is strongly advocated for building up the nervous forces. Butter, cheese, fish, and potatoes are now considered indispensable to training. This, again, is in direct opposition to Captain Barclay's views. All milk-puddings are, of course, excellent.

For the following menu, which is in vogue at the Universities, I am indebted to Mr. E. H. Ryles's book, "Athletics":—

BREAKFAST.—Porridge; eggs, kidneys or liver and bacon or chop and steak; toast, jam or marmalade; tea, coffee, or cocoa.

LUNCH.—Cold roast beef or mutton; fresh vegetables; stewed fruits and milk-puddings; biscuits, or toast and butter; ale or plain water.

DINNER.—Clear soup; fish; roast meat, fowl or game, and vegetables; stewed fruit and puddings; ale or red wine.

It will be seen that they feed them very well in training at the 'Varsity and keep their condition high. But, then, the 'Varsity athlete is able to get in more training work than falls to the lot of the average business man.

This almost concludes the English system, and it will be seen that opinions have changed pretty considerably in the last century, although the general root principle seems to be the same. On this system we have excelled in the production of long-distance runners, for it is a system that makes for staying power and endurance rather than great strength or quickness.

It must be remembered that it takes at least three generations to see the effect of a diet upon a nation. Now, the English people in bygone ages were essentially a race eating largely of plain and wholesome food. In the last few generations we have taken to eating far too many "made" dishes, and to this, among other causes, I attribute our falling-off in athletics.



"POWERS OF GREAT ENDURANCE."

I was recently talking to Lieut. Muller, the inventor of "My System," and one of the most perfect specimens of manhood it has ever been my good fortune to meet. He pointed out very forcibly the reason why the Scandinavian and Norse people excel so greatly in the strong-men events, by which I mean hammer-throwing, etc. Lieut. Muller said the Scandinavian people are so big and strong because their foods are simple and wholesome.

"In England meat and fish form the main part of your meals, and with it you eat only a little piece of white bread, the half of which you leave beside your plate. This white bread is stimulating, but not nourishing. In Scandinavia we eat little meat and fish, with a large thick slab of coarse black rye bread, which builds up both bone and muscle; also we have but one hot meat or fish meal daily, at midday; at the other meals we eat rye bread spread with butter and jam or dripping. Frequently we also eat pork with our bread, than which there is no more nourishing flesh.

"We do not eat soups made from flesh; instead, we have a large basin of thick porridge put in the middle of the table, and with this we take large quantities of butter-milk. We also have soups made of other cereals. Again, we eat large quantities of boiled potatoes, which are their best form. We do not go in for sauté, fried, or chipped potatoes, as you do."

It may be pointed out that the Irish and Scots people, who excel in the field events, also eat a great deal of porridge or potatoes, while their bread is made from whole meal.

Of the French people it may be said that they are just beginning to come to their own in international athletics, because, during the last few years, the athletes have given up French cookery and taken to the English or

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American diet. As Fleurac once said, "Our system is the same as that practised in America, except that the American is told what he is to eat, whereas we eat what we like—in reason."

The Japanese are so entirely new to sporting pastimes that it is impossible to point to the successes they have gained on any special diet. Yet one may instance the marvellous endurance of their soldiers in the Russo-Japanese War, when the basis of their diet was fish and soya beans. Nowadays they are beginning to eat more meat, with what result a future generation will see. It has been said of the Japanese and Hindus that their staple diet is rice, but this is incorrect—rice is certainly an essential part of their food-scheme, but only in so far as rice is to them what bread is to us.

Perhaps some of the finest runners in the world are the Hindu rickshaw coolies, who live principally on lentils and rice. It is amazing to see the quantity of lentil soup a rickshaw-boy will eat after a heavy day's work.

It yet remains to be seen what the Germans can do in the realm of athletics, and doubtless the 1916 Olympiad at Berlin will show this, but I am of the opinion that for generations past the German people have been too fond of lager beer, rich stodgy cakes, and too great a variety of dishes at a meal. It will take a number of years of plain living to work off the effects of so much rich living. Of course there will be a few athletes who live on plain food in training until 1916 who will do well, but the nation as a whole will not benefit yet.



"FOR GENERATIONS PAST THE GERMAN PEOPLE HAVE BEEN TOO FOND OF LAGER BEER."

The American system of diet is perhaps best exemplified in Hjertberg's book "Athletics in Theory and Practice," soably edited by the old Cambridge Blue, Mr. S. S. Abrahams, in which the food-stuffs are set out as follows:—

FLESH.—Beef, lamb, mutton, fowl, and fresh fish.

VEGETABLES.—Spinach, salads, asparagus (without oil or butter), potatoes (baked or boiled), beans, peas, and tomatoes.

FRUIT.—Oranges, apples (boiled or roasted), all cooked fruit, such as pears, figs, etc., fresh fruit, particularly apples.

BREAD.—Toast made from bread hard before toasting. Soft and hot bread must be avoided.

*Note.*—Boiled eggs and omelets are very good.

When I began to consider the part of this article to deal with special diets I at once thought of Mr. Eustace Miles and went to see him. By bad luck I put my foot in it straight away, and quite upset Mr. Miles by asking him to tell me about his "vegetarian diet." He was most indignant, and said, "For Heaven's sake don't talk to me about vegetarianism. I don't believe in it. It means the eating of vegetables alone. Mine is a food-reform system, based on the substitution of other substances for meat."

At present there are about twenty different food-reform diets having nothing in common except the avoidance of meat. But whether the bases of a food-reform diet is cheese, nuts, salad, or proprietary foods is a matter for the individual to decide. As a general rule cyclists, walkers, and swimmers make eggs and cheese their chief bases. The great advantage of such a diet is that it does not necessitate the taking of regular exercise, and so is of incalculable value to the busy City man who cannot practise athletic training regularly. It is also excellent for giving powers of endurance, if the diet is well chosen. Another thing about it is the avoidance of excessive bulk and too great a variety of dishes at any one meal.

I believe that the Vegetarian Cycling and Athletic Club, who rely upon this diet, comparing their membership with other clubs, hold the record for feats of endurance.

To see that there really is a sound foundation in these schemes of food reform one has only to mention such men as Eustace Miles, himself a food reformer for twenty years; Olley, the long-distance cyclist; Karlmann, the winner of the 126 miles' walk from Dresden to Berlin in 26 hours 52 mins.; and Freddie Welsh, the holder of the World's Lightweight Championship.

Briefly summarized, I think the athletes' motto should be "Good plain food and plenty of it." One most striking and most important fact, which stands out beyond dispute from a study of the subject, is that no athlete can do his best on the modern French cookery, which has become almost universal among the higher classes all over the world.

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# Nero Junior

## By Herman Scheffauer

*Illustrated by Balfour Ker*

THE new picture palace, white, beautiful, and resplendent, lifted itself at the head of the long and noisome slum street. It was a temple of immaculate plaster, with a spacious arch, a gilded cupola, and a glittering booking-office of brass and mahogany. Many brilliant placards flamed and clamoured about its entrance.

A tall porter in a plum-coloured uniform encrusted with much gold braid stalked majestically to and fro, slapping his trousers leg with his little cane. Beyond the heavy plush curtains and the harsh green artificial palms about the two doors brooded the solemn, thick, mysterious dusk of the interior.

At night it blazed forth into a huge magician's palace, studded with rows of incandescents as with strings of pearls, and flaring with several fierce arcs like small golden suns. It was a glorious apparition of brightness and splendour and life.

The picture palace had just been erected by Mr. Samuel Bracker, who was also the landlord of that entire street of slum dwellings, as well as of the Purple Vine public-house at the other end. The row of houses which bore the name of Bracker's Rents had become unfit for human habitation, and the Board of Public Works was about to condemn them to be demolished.

Into the great white arch, as into an insatiable mouth, flowed the poor and swarming population of the neighbourhood. The pence of the people shot into the little brazen grate in the ticket-seller's cage, the square aluminium tokens rattled down in a steady automatic clatter.

Within, in the warm, thick darkness, broken only by the red exit lamps, the will-o'-the-wisp flashes of the attendants' electric torches, and the white and silvery light flickering over the solid scre[en] [sat] the hushed audience. Their [fa]ces and dull eyes shone as with [sil]ver in the reflected light. [Th]e world of dreams, in w[hich] forgotten—a subt[le] optic nerve, a[nd] shed a gent[le]

No th[ing]

hungr[y]

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the tale of love and crime, and lusted eagerly for more. The pageant of the world flowed through the purring machine like water through a sieve, a shadowy world of grey and black, which, at least in its lack of colour, was very like their own.

The audience was in a state of incessant ebb and flow. Old men, old women, sweated seamstresses, married couples, shop assistants, servants, and myriads of children came to look upon the pictures.

The avalanche of coppers turned into a golden flood, and the golden flood was symbolized by the steadily-increasing numerals in the credit account of Mr. Samuel Bracker at his bank. The stream of profits that flowed from the public-house and the mouldy, crumbling warrens of houses was as nothing compared with the rushing river of metal that passed through the hands of the wan-faced girl in the booking-office of the picture palace.

The children of the neighbourhood now lived only for the palace. They worshipped it with devotion and reverence. It formed the chief topic of their chatter and the chief vision of their dreams. It was something which for conspicuous brilliance was comparable only to the sun.

But none of them regarded it with more awe than little Mart Pemblin. He was five years old, had a pretty face, an adventurous mind, and much impulsive enterprise—seeds of future genius or crime.

Mart lived on the top floor of the tenement that adjoined the picture theatre. Sometimes his mother took him to see the films; sometimes it was his father. His father, however, usually preferred to patronize the establishment at the other end of the street, the Purple Vine, from whose doors everlastingly evaporated a pungent smell of stale beer and tartarean alcohol.

The fairy-tales which the teachers at the kindergarten told Mart and his ragged, unwashed, and peak-faced companions were pale and dim compared with the clashing splendour and glare of the picture palace. To Mart it had become the one glorious fact of life, a sun about which the grey and dingy universe spun and frothed like the blue-grey water in his mother's wash-tub.

He spent a great deal of his time staring at the sensational posters and the elegant plush curtains at the door. Mortally he envied the elder boys who had pennies to spend, procured from unimaginably mysterious sources. It was seldom that he possessed the necessary tuppence to enter the theatre himself. Now and again he was able to save a halfpenny on some purchase which his mother sent him to make.

Once or twice he imitated the example of some of the other children, and boldly begged from passers-by. Tuppence was the children's price, the "Open Sesame" to his wonderland.

Whenever his irascible mother ordered him into the house, he would lean from the window of a bare room that opened out above the roof of the picture palace and listen to the music that floated out of the ventilators and skylights.

Directly beneath his window, and behind the theatre, was the new garage of raw yellow brick which Samuel Bracker had built. It opened on a narrow street, and contained two splendid cars, the visible symbols of his increasing wealth.

This day Mart had achieved incredible riches in the shape of a sixpence he had found near the muddy tram-track. He spent the entire afternoon in the cinema, and received a thrashing from his mother when he returned.

She was a tall, sinewy woman with red arms and scant hair. "Mart!" she screamed, "if you go near that there picter place again, I'll beat ye to a jelly."

But the very next day, when Mart was sent out with his little satchel for a pound of sugar, his eyes were arrested by a gaudy poster in violet, red, and yellow. "The Burning of Rome," said the inscription, which he could not read.

It represented a great fire. The conflagration was devouring whole blocks of buildings. Hurricanes of flames and sparks shot up against the skies. From the gutted walls of Cæsar's palace puffed up enormous clouds of smoke. Gallant soldiers in brazen helmets were plunging like salamanders into the flames. And in the streets was a great crowd, evidently in blankets and nightgowns. They were cheering the Roman soldier who rescued a damsel from a top window. There was also a wicked, repulsive-looking man with a wreath about his head, who sang and played a funny something that looked like a harp. Mart, fascinated, stood open-mouthed and stared at the poster.

If there was one thing that was able to plunge his young soul into instant ecstasy, it was a fire. He loved all the pictures in the theatre, save certain stupid ones dealing with plants and nasty insects, but the films that showed wallowing clouds of smoke, explosions, and sharp tongues of flame he



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simply adored. He had been born into the dingy slums, a worshipper of light and fire.

And here to-day was the most thrilling fire-film he had ever seen. How lucky he was still to have fourpence of his own!

He entered the theatre and remained over three hours. He feasted twice upon the spectacular coloured film of "The Burning of Rome" in all its various scenes. Finally he remembered the sugar, and that it was long past tea-time.

He toddled up the dark aisle. He passed the little isolated cabinet at the rear of the hall, where the shafts of livid light streamed sharply out over the heads of the audience through the mote-laden air. A clicking, humming sound came from within, a breath of warm air from the crack in the slightly open door, a sputtering, a glare. A dark figure, across whose face lay bars and spots of brilliant light, was turning a handle. On the floor, close to the door, were several reels. These must be the things that made the magic pictures—the fire-pictures.

He stretched out his dirty little paw, seized one of the reels, and put it in his satchel. Then he trotted out. He bought the sugar at the grocer's, and then, solacing himself with the thought of the feast he had just enjoyed, faced the lean and angry woman who had been waiting three hours for him to return. He received several hard slaps over hands and face, and howled lustily.

"What's this?" asked his mother, pulling forth the reel.

Mart blubbered, but did not answer.

He was thrust into the bare room without his tea. The reel was flung in after him, with the warning that his father would attend to him when he came home. Immediately he stopped sobbing, ran to the window, raised the sash, and looked out.

He heard the tinkling of the piano in the theatre beneath. He amused himself by spitting down upon the green skylight in Bracker's garage. But he soon wearied of this, and turned from the window.

On the floor in one corner he saw the reel, a somewhat remarkable-looking monster. One end had come loose, and several yards of the film now lay unrolled in great glistening loops, like some enormous, colourless tape-worm. He stared at it, approached it. He took it up and smelled it. It had a sickly, pungent odour. He next tasted it. It stuck to his lips. He marvelled at the little perforations along the edges, and when he held it to the light he cried with joy at the hundreds of little pictures, the fire-pictures, tinted a clear red and yellow.

He had seen the film rolling into the machine. And in the machine there was a lantern, a light. Obviously a light was necessary. He thought of the lamp in the bedroom across the hall.

Cautiously he opened the door and peered out. He saw his mother, her head bent over her crossed bare arms on the kitchen table, asleep—a pot of tea before her, a halfpenny newspaper at her elbow. He had learned certain motions of craft and stealth from watching the heroes or villains on the films.

Carefully he tip-toed across the hall, took the lamp from the little table in the bedroom, snatched up a box of matches, and tip-toed back. He set the lamp upon the empty box near the window and lighted it. But the sun was still shining without. Darkness he felt was somehow necessary, so he let the old blind that lay coiled against the ceiling rattle down.

He then took the coils of film in his hand and passed them awkwardly up and down before the lamp. But no pictures leaped into life against the dirty and broken plaster walls. He unravelled yards of the resilient celluloid. Then suddenly the iron reel slipped from his hands and rolled across the floor. The lamp was knocked over by a wriggling loop. The naked flame leaped for the film.

There was a bright, explosive blaze, the flame sputtered and writhed and hissed and leaped high into the air. It flew in fantastic curves over the floor and through the air, following the curves of the ribbon. It shot up near the window and caught the old blind, which in turn flared up against the ceiling, with its broken plaster and naked lath. There were blazing pools of oil upon the floor.

Mart shrieked. He heard the scrape of his mother's chair, her hurried, flopping walk. She burst into the room. The flames gave a grotesque expression to her red face, with its high cheek-bones and little wisps of hair. She screamed, seized the burning reel with her big hands, and flung it through the flaming window.

It roared through the air, blazing fiercely, like a comet, and dragging after it wriggling streamers of inextinguishable flame. There was a crash of glass somewhere below. Mrs. Pemblin gave one glance at the room. The fire was already eating itself into the unprotected walls and floor and ceiling. She gave Mart a cuff over the ear and flung him out into the hall.

"Let it burn," she said, scowling. "Serve 'im right—the pig, the brute! What's the odds? Ain't we insured?"

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"SHE SCREAMED AND SEIZED THE BURNING REEL WITH HER BIG HANDS."

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She shut the door upon the burning room. She ran into the bedroom and tore open drawers and flung several dresses, papers, and odds and ends into a big basket. She tore the portrait of her father and mother from the wall, as well as that of little Artie, who had sickened of the bad drains in Bracker's Rents and died. Then she ran into the kitchen for an ancestral silver spoon she had forgotten.

Her roving eye caught sight of the wash-tub in one corner, the bluish water full of muddy bubbles, a bit of white linen protruding like an ear. With a gesture of rage and disgust, she lifted her foot and kicked the wash-tub off its stool. The tub tilted, the slate-coloured water ran over the kitchen and into the hall-way. Then, with her basket under one arm, and dragging Mart by the hand, she tramped down the stairs, yelling :—

"Fire! Fire! Bracker's beastly rat-hole's goin' at last!"

The flaming, humming reel crashed through the skylight into the garage. It fell sputtering upon the oil-soaked floor amidst the petrol tins. An instant blaze leaped up, a fountain of flickering flame that soared to the wooden roof. There was no one in the garage; the doors were locked.

The two beautiful cars—one an open touring car, the other a large limousine—stood in the centre of the shed, sleek, glistening monsters. They reflected the fire from their polished enamelled flanks, from their glistening brass and nickel, from the plate-glass of the limousine, from the steel bosses in the thick armoured wheels.

There was an explosion that flung a rain of flaming petrol over the entire interior. It was followed by another, and still another. Great streams of blazing fluid flowed over the floor, against the walls, under the cars. The interior of the garage became a mass of solid flame that roared and sang like a furnace. The magnificent cars burned like billets of wood, their japanned sides buckled and crackled, the inflated tyres burst like cannon-shots. The fire attacked the dusty, useless windows that led into the back of the picture theatre adjoining.

The people in the picture theatre were feasting upon the multiple splendours of "The Burning of Rome." Several of the younger members of the rapt audience had just hissed the monstrous Nero, who sat and smiled and played his lyre and sang as his city went up in flames. Then portentous tidings drifted in from the world without, through the heavy plush curtains. Excited whispers ran from seat to seat.

"There's a fire next door in Bracker's Rents!"

What was the painted photographic fire in an imitation ancient Rome compared with the thrilling reality of a fire next door? One by one the audience left and hurried out, as the intelligence flew about. Many of the spectators, chiefly weary housewives, were themselves living in Bracker's Rents. They rushed frantically from the place.

Soon the films were flickering to no one but an old man and an old woman who had gone to sleep and were nodding in the threepenny seats. A choking smell filled the theatre. The operator, abandoning his search, punctuated by curses, for the continuation of "Rome," stopped his machine. The manager came rushing in from behind the screen.

"We'd better get out," he yelled to the operator and the attendants. "Wake those two old duffers. Old Bracker's garage is blazing like a bonfire, and the theatre's catching, too."

Unceremoniously they bundled out the old couple and rushed from the darkened theatre into the street just as a spurt of vivid flame shot from behind the hangings of the arch. It flickered across the pale screen, as if in mockery of the crude, tinted flames which had been playing there a moment before.

The fire was swooping in great billows across the roofs of Bracker's Rents. It reached forward as with long arms to embrace the entire row of the foul, decrepit, jerry-built slum-houses. It ate its way through from wall to wall. The flames from the cinema theatre and the garage rose in scarlet sheets and spirals to the heavens, and thick brownish clouds of smoke wallowed up.

The tenants of Bracker's Rents were flinging their mattresses and clothing out of the windows and dragging their few sticks of miserable furniture into the street. A hundred willing hands assisted them. A long row of rickety bedsteads, tables, chairs, bedding, china, rugs, lamps, cheap jardinières, and bird-cages ran like a barricade along the street and against the walls of the houses opposite.

They had saved most of their pitiful possessions. Their more valuable things slumbered safely enough in Ritzig's pawnshop in the High Street. The housewives and children stood about in groups, gossiping

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loudly, or watched the flames in dumb fascination. Some of them laughed and jested. It was Bracker's loss, not theirs. Gipsy-like, they "didn't mind movin'." They deplored, however, the burning of the convenient picture palace, for this had provided them with much amusement.

It was the common opinion that Bracker had started the fire himself. His buildings had been condemned by the County Council. What could be more natural than that he should try to collect his insurance beforehand? One loud-tongued woman, however, scouted this idea.

"He ain't got the gumption to do it," she shouted. "You mark my words. It's them there Suffragettes."

Little Mart Pemblin sat with his mother at a second-storey window in the house of some friendly neighbours opposite, and stared in ecstasy at the blaze.

Before the engines and firemen arrived, the flames had swept over the entire length of Bracker's Rents, and were burning downward towards the street. The handsome white front of the cinema theatre was scarred with flame and blasted with smoke. The plaster ornaments crumbled back to lime and dust, the hundreds of incandescent globes went off like a fusillade of rifle-shots.

The engines stood and puffed and panted and breathed their brown smoke into the air from their black throats. The flat woven hoses which the firemen dragged through the streets inflated themselves to thick and swollen pythons, rigid and inert. Snow-white fountains of water soared into the air, great billows of steam arose, a section of roof fell in and sent whirlwinds of sparks and cinders up against the sunset skies. A wall quivered, tottered, balanced, then fell crashing into the sea of crimson and amber that rioted behind the doors and windows.

Firemen in gleaming helmets that seemed like masses of golden fire rushed to and fro, yelling.

Suddenly little Mart clapped his hands and cried :—

"There's daddy!"

A man with grimy clothes and smudged face, evidently an iron-moulder, had dashed forward, evading the policemen. He ran into the doorway of his house and tried to mount the steps. A blast of smoke and flame shot out as from a mouth and drove him back. He choked and rubbed his eyes, and shouted inarticulate things about his wife and child. The policeman who dragged him back pointed out the lean woman who stood at the second-storey window opposite, shouting :—

"Jim! Jim!"

The crowd cheered. James Pemblin went into the house, and a few moments later stood beside his wife and little son.

A taxi-cab came rushing up. Out of it tumbled a short, burly man, in silk hat and an ulster with an astrachan collar. There was horror in his eyes and a sort of impotent wrath. A policeman tried to stop him, but he roared out a few words and strode in front of the row of blazing houses. But he gave them scarcely a glance. His eyes were fixed upon the stately but sham "palace" that was crumbling into ashes and cinders. He gnawed his scrubby iron-grey moustache, and strode down the burning street. A stout Irishwoman shouted :—

"Bless me, if that ain't Bracker himself!"

Bracker had never been a familiar figure in Bracker's Rents. But now he was instantly surrounded by a group of furious housewives. They thrust their angry faces into his own; he saw their eyes flash, and heard the torrents of abuse they poured upon him.

They reviled him, scorched him with their tongues; they cursed his pestiferous drains, his crushing rents, the foulness, neglect, and decay that lorded it from end to end of his street. They called him blood-sucker and murderer and firebrand. He was responsible for the death of their babies, for their illnesses, for the evictions of his accursed agent. They hoped his "pub" would burn, too—his dirty "pub," where their husbands spent their wages on poisonous beer.

One sinewy virago drove her clenched fist down upon his silk hat and crushed it over his furry ears. Another grasped his astrachan collar and half tore it from the coat. Mr. Samuel Bracker imagined himself in hell, surrounded by gibbering she-fiends.

He fled down the street between the rows of enraged women. They hurled ill-directed missiles at him, plates, potatoes, coal from scuttles, scraps of food. An open tin of dripping caught him on the shoulder and spattered over his handsome coat. An egg, flung with a deadly aim by a young boy, struck him on the back like a bomb and made a great sun with golden rays.

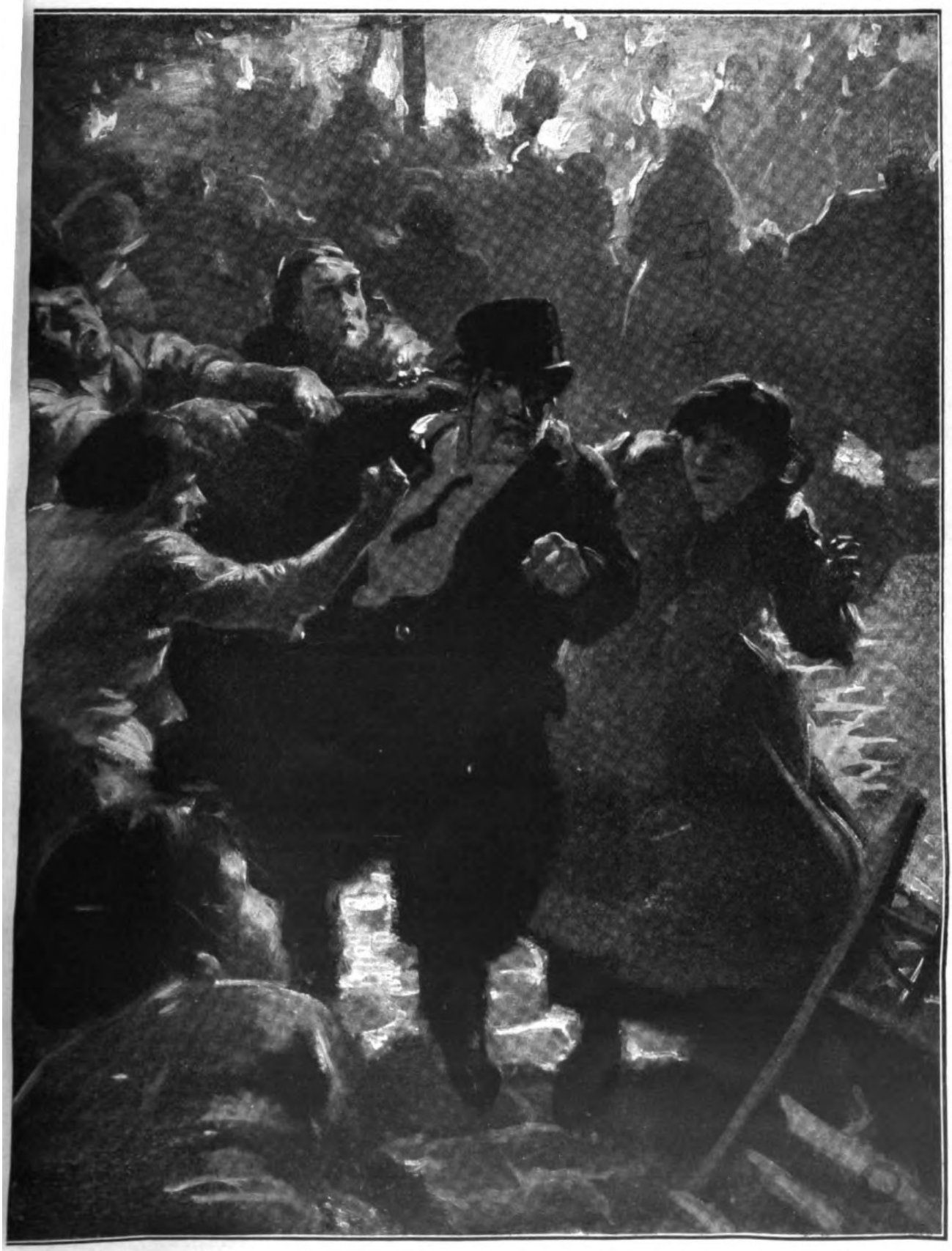
The children hissed him as they had hissed Nero upon the films a little while before. The women yelled to the firemen to turn their hoses upon him. The hounded landlord fled towards the Purple Vine at the other end of the street, panting, sweating, covered with soot and cinders, and splashed with the

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"THEY CALLED HIM BLOOD-SUCKER AND MURDERER AND FIREBRAND. HE WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR

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THE DEATH OF THEIR BABIES, FOR THEIR ILLNESSES, FOR THE EVICTIONS OF HIS ACCURSED AGENT."

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puddles into which he plunged. Behind him Bracker's Rents were now only Bracker's ruins.

Little Mart leaned out of the window and chuckled with delight. The spectacle was sublime. It was more beautiful than the film he had seen that afternoon, "The Burning of Rome." The brazen helmets of the English firemen were brighter and bigger than the brazen helmets of the Roman soldiers. This conflagration was devouring a palace more gorgeous than that of the Cæsars. And the crowd was bigger, a brave and jolly and reckless crowd that found great sport in the fire.

How they had laughed when the women stormed Bracker! An ecstasy possessed little Mart. He shouted to that sea of cloth caps in the street below and waved his hands. His father stared solemnly into the street and clutched him grimly by the belt of his little frock.

An Italian woman with a piano-organ tried to push her cumbrous vehicle through the crowd. The line of police barred her way, so she let down the instrument and began plying the handle. It was an excellent opportunity; she scented pence. And suddenly there was loud and sprightly music that mingled with the dull, throaty roar of the conflagration, the hissing of the streams of water, the shouts of the firemen.

And now little Mart understood why that man with the leaves round his head had played his funny harp during the fire. The slum-child laughed at the flames, and applauded them with glad cries, just as Nero had hailed them with song. He did not know that they were purging the city of a plague-spot, wiping out a long, black, evil score of death, poverty, and disease.

A young man, accompanied by their friendly neighbour, came pushing into the room. He carried a box of polished wood, which had three long legs shod with iron points. This he planted in the adjoining window and began turning the handle. The operation puzzled Mart. This was a real fire. What had the film machine to do with it?

"'E's takin' the photigrafts for the films!" whispered his mother. "And there's another one o' them on the roof yonder."

Upon the cornice of the pompous "funeral furnishers'" establishment diagonally across the street stood a man, sharply outlined against the sunset sky. He, too, was turning a crank in a similar little box on three legs. On the top of a tall step-ladder that reared suddenly out of the crowd appeared a third film photographer. Mrs. Pemblin gazed at the fire. Its vastness, might, splendour, the confusion, and the crowds touched her imagination. Its ruddy reflex seemed to soften her seamed and faded face into a little of its youthful comeliness. A dreamy and pensive look crept into her faded blue eyes.

She bent over and whispered proudly into her husband's ear:—

"And to think of our little Mart bein' the cause of all that—'im, the little nipper—and a single match!"

"Good thing I paid that fire insurance last week," growled her husband.

"Good thing you didn't go to the Purple Vine last Sat'dy night," she replied.

The soul-stirring melody of the "Marseillaise" poured torrentially from the labouring piano-organ in the street below. The flames began to die down under the tremendous cannonade of water. Evening came. The electric lights sprang into life. The crowd dispersed, the snorting fire-engines rumbled homeward. The dispossessed tenants crowded into the friendly but already overcrowded houses of their neighbours over the way. The black and jagged ruins still smoked feebly, and now and again sent up a wisp of smoke or a jet of steam to the stars.

A few days thereafter little Mart Pemblin, in the company of his mother, was again indulging his passion for fire-pictures. He sat in a plush-covered seat of the Electric Pavilion in a neighbouring street, and gazed with wide eyes at a film entitled "The Great Fire at Bracker's Rents, Poplar."

It was not red and yellow, like that of Rome; but it was much more beautiful. It was his own fire; he had made it all himself.

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# "As Funny as They Can."

II.

## By TONY SARG.

The following section is the second of a series founded upon an entirely new idea—a different well-known humorous artist assuming the post of editor every month and doing his best to make his particular instalment "as funny as he can."

Arrangements have already been made with the following artists:—

***H. M. BATEMAN, JOHN HASSALL, W. HEATH ROBINSON, HARRY ROUNTREE, CHARLES PEARS.***

It will be interesting to hear from our readers at the end of a few months which editor they consider has been most successful in making them laugh



"I PICTURED MYSELF SEATED AT MY DESK, GLOWING WITH PLEASURE IN THE HAPPY PROCESS OF GIVING COMMISSIONS TO MY ARTIST FRIENDS."



MR. TONY SARG.

Dear Sir,

I did not know what I was letting myself in for when I accepted the invitation of "The Strand Magazine" to edit six pages of humorous drawings. At first I pictured myself seated at my desk, and glowing with pleasure in the happy process of giving commissions to my artist friends—all suddenly grown deferential—and handing out the guineas in payment for their work. Instead of which—but you will see from the illustrations how far my efforts have been rewarded with success.

First I asked the famous artist Harry Rountree to draw me a page of humorous types of London. But in my enthusiasm I forgot that he has won his fame as an animal artist Rountree, however, was not at all taken back by my request. In fact, he seemed to think it perfectly natural



"INSTEAD OF WHICH——"



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"MR. HARRY ROUNTREE SEEMED TO THINK IT PERFECTLY NATURAL THAT ALL SORTS OF QUEER BEASTS SHOULD FIGURE AMONG THE SPECIMENS OF LONDON LIFE."

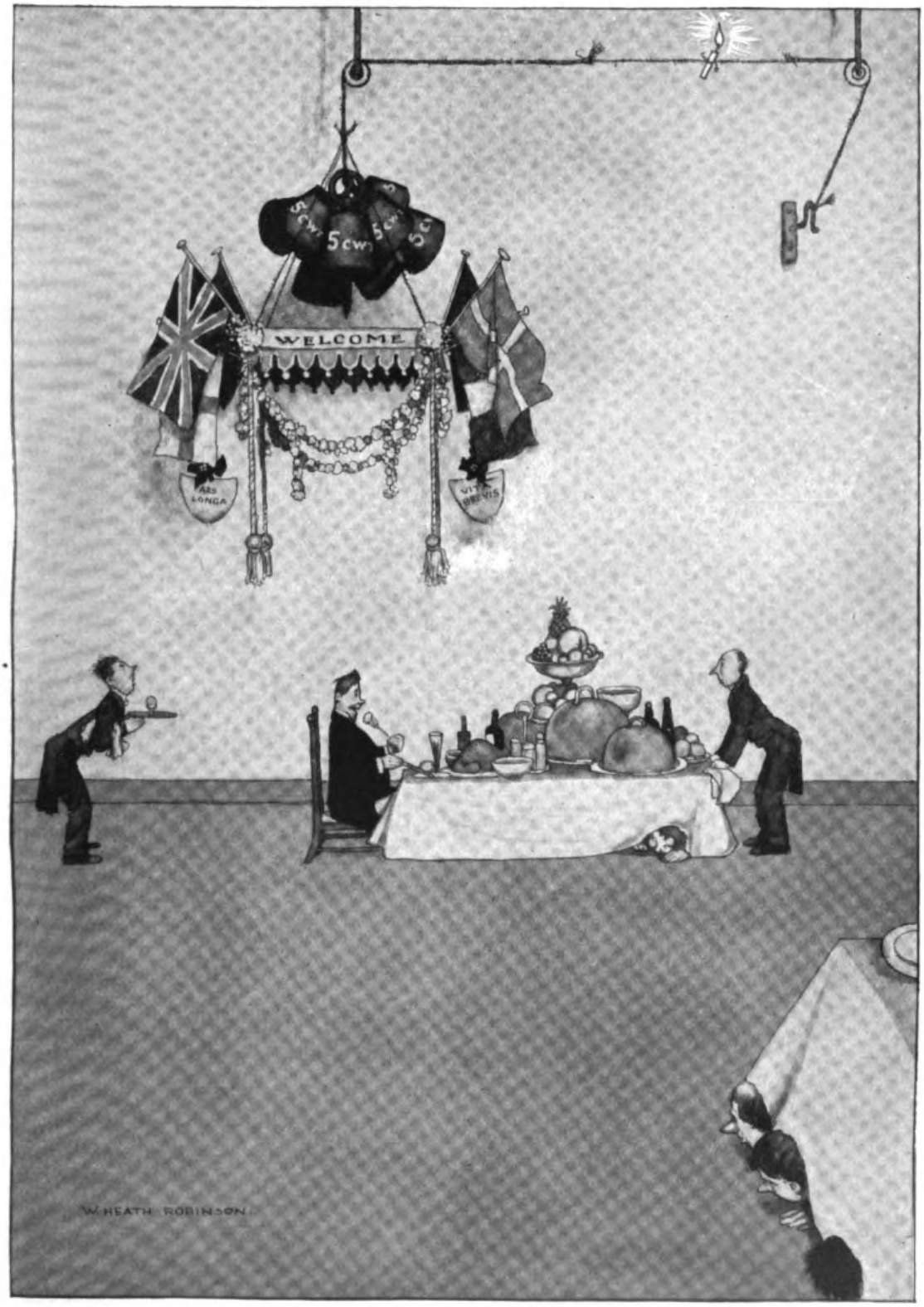
that all sorts of queer beasts should figure among the specimens of London life. At any rate, the result of my oversight is that all these London types appear as animals —except for a fish or two!

Then I thought of Heath Robinson and decided to ask him to do me one of his complicated absurdities. The drawing came along all right, but this time I for one fail to see the joke. It may be obvious to Heath Robinson — perhaps even your readers may find it funny; but not I, for the diner in the picture is myself.

For a relief I went to Alfred Leete. Knowing his inventive power I said to myself: "No need to bother about detailed instructions for Leete—all I shall have to do will be to ask him to do something funny for me in the 'Strand' and I can leave

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Notice to editor! If possible - don't use this drawing (much too personal) T.S.




ONE OF THE MANY SCHEMES FOR ENTIRELY DOING AWAY WITH TONY SARG, DEVISED BY HIS BROTHER ARTISTS.

the rest to him." But you see how impossible it is to rely on anyone' inventiveness working the right way. Look at his drawing and notice with what blank literalness he has taken his instructions; it just shows how far a really sensible man can go wrong if he tries.

Then it struck me that it would be quite a clever idea to ask Walter Emanuel

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ALFRED LEETE DOING SOMETHING FUNNY IN THE "STRAND" FOR TONY SARG.

for a humorous sketch, meaning, of course, a literary composition. Wrong again. Emanuel agreed, but thinking I was expecting drawings (from him!) he illustrated his article. However, as the alleged drawing is here I have had a block made from it, and with apologies to the Editor present it to his readers.

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# THE LOVE-LY TAM-ER, THE CRU-EL LI-ONS, AND THE CLEV-ER CLOWN.

***A TALE FOR THE LIT-TLE ONES.***

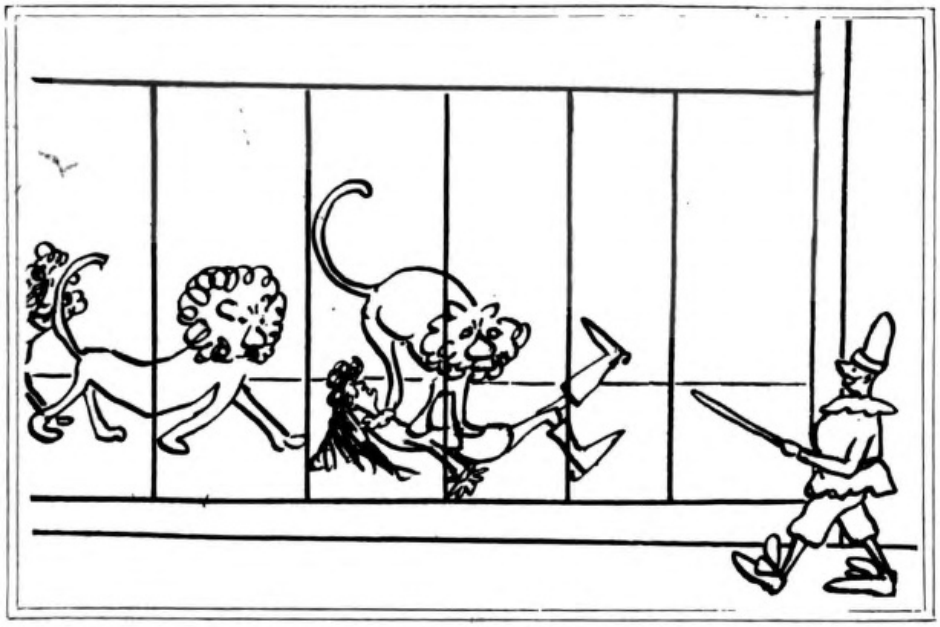
Written and Illustrated by WALTER EMANUEL.

THERE was once a love-ly tam-er named Za-za, and some cru-el li-ons named Fi-do, Em-ily, Li-on, Kru-ger, Jane, Cæs-ar, and Rough, and a clev-er Clown named Lit-tle Smil-ax.

They were all in a Cir-cus.

One eve-ning Za-za was not feel-ing well. She had a bil-i-ous head-ache. She said to the Own-er of the Cir-cus, "I feel ill. Need I go in-to the cage of Li-ons?" The Own-er, who was a cru-el man, said, "You must. The Pub-lic must not be dis-ap-point-ed."

So brave Za-za went in, but this eve-ning she had no pow-er ov-er the Li-ons. They re-fused to o-bey her, and sud-den-ly Cæs-ar and Rough rushed at Za-za, and knocked her down. "Come on, oth-er li-ons," said Cæs-ar, "now we have her."



Ever-y-one was in shrieks.

"Fetch red-hot po-kers," cried the Owner. But no red-hot po-kers could be found.

"Oh dear, oh dear," cried Lit-tle Smil-ax, for he loved Za-za. Then a beau-ti-ful smile light-ed up his face. He had thought of some-thing. He ran swift-ly, and fetched his sham red-hot po-ker. Then he rushed to the cage with it, and when the cru-el li-ons saw him, they cried, "Oh, look out, here comes a red-hot po-ker!" and they left Za-za, and ran to the far end of the cage.

So Za-za was saved, and a clerg-y-man was fetched, and Za-za mar-ried Lit-tle Smil-ax, and they had ev-er so man-y lit-tle clown-lets and col-um-bines, and the cru-el li-ons were pun-ished by hav-ing no pud-ding with their din-ner for a whole week.

I had already thought of G. E. Studdy, and had asked him for a humorous page something like those he does for the "Sketch." Studdy seemed to have forgotten the commission, but at length the drawing came—last of all—and, as the reader will see, with more than a hint in it that he would like payment in advance.

Well, here are the six pages, but next time I shall have to ask the humorists to be a little more serious about their business.

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"MR. G. E. STUDDY SENT IN HIS HUMOROUS PAGE WITH MORE THAN A HINT THAT HE WOULD LIKE PAYMENT IN ADVANCE."

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# "OUT OF THE JAWS OF DEATH."

## In the Home of the Blizzard.

### By DOUGLAS MAWSON.

II.

**Last month's article left Sir Douglas Mawson and his comrade, Dr. Mertz, alone in the wilderness of ice, hundreds of miles from camp. In the following article he concludes his thrilling narrative of the horrors of the journey, during which he lost his companion and from which he only just managed to struggle back to safety. The article is fully illustrated by some most remarkable photographs, and by drawings made under Sir Douglas Mawson's personal supervision.**

*Photographs by J. F. Hurley, except where otherwise mentioned.*



**DR. X. MERTZ,**
THE STORY OF WHOSE TRAGIC DEATH IS TOLD IN THE PRESENT ARTICLE.

**Mertz and I Go On Alone.**

WHEN comrades tramp the road to anywhere through a lonely, blizzard-ridden land, in hunger, want, and weariness, the interests, ties, and fates of each are interwoven as a wondrous fabric of friendship and affection.

The shock of Ninnis's death struck home and deeply stirred us.

We felt the more keenly because the accident happened at a time when our spirits were at their highest point reached on the journey. A mollifying influence was, no doubt, our attitude towards undesirable emergencies; strung to the outlook of men on active military service—prepared to take things as they come, never knowing what of the morrow.

Tramping home on the long trail to the hut on the night of December 15th, there was no immediate anxiety for Mertz and myself, only the care of a famished interior and a doubtful outlook ahead. For the return journey a course was laid well south of the outgoing track. By so doing it was anticipated that most of the obstacles to rapid travelling would be avoided.

For fourteen miles the way led up rising snow-slopes until an elevation of over two thousand five hundred feet had been reached. After that variable grades were the rule. The five dogs required helping to drag the sledge along, light though it was. The midnight sun shone in the south, and on through the morning hours we tramped, glad to be ticking off the miles that



**SIR DOUGLAS MAWSON,**
THE LEADER OF THE EXPEDITION.
*Photo. by F. A. Swaine.*

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Copyright, 1914, by Douglas Mawson.

lay between us and ample food. The sky rapidly became overcast in the early morning hours and showers of snow fell. In such a light, in the midst of a snowy landscape, with no shadows to give contrast, it is impossible to distinguish even the detail of the ground underfoot. Stumbling over unseen ridges in the hard *névé* surface, the eyes strain to catch a glimpse of the ground ahead. Coloured glasses become blocked with the driving snow, the naked eyes are blinded with the visionless glare.

About 6 a.m., having done twenty miles, camp was pitched—a lengthy process on account of the makeshift gear. There was little sleep for me that day, for I was attacked in both eyes with painful snow-blindness. During the time that we rested in the sleeping-bags I got Mertz to treat one of my eyes to three doses, the other to two doses, of zinc sulphate and cocaine—the infallible remedy in such cases.

That night ours was a mournful procession—the sky completely overcast, snow falling, I with one eye bandaged, and the dog Johnstone, broken down, strapped on the top of the load on the sledge. There was scarcely a sound, only the rustle of the thick, soft snow as we pushed on, tired but full of hope. The dogs dumbly pressed forward in their harness, forlorn but eager to follow. Their weight now told little upon the sledge, the work mainly falling upon ourselves. As there was soft snow upon the ground Mertz tried hauling the sledge on ski, but came to the conclusion that it did not pay, and henceforth never again used the ski.

Near the magnetic pole as we were, our compass was of very little use, and to steer anything like a straight course without ever seeing anything about us was a difficult task. The only check upon the correctness of our bearing was the direction in which lay the old hard winter sastrugi, channelled out along nearly north and south lines. As these were obliterated by the newly-fallen snow, frequent halts had to be called to investigate the buried surface. Only eleven miles were covered and camp had to be pitched.

### Losing the Dogs.

There Johnstone was shot. He had always been a very faithful, hard-working, and willing creature, with rather droll ways with him, and we were sorry that his end should come so soon. He could never be accused of being a handsome dog; in fact, was generally disreputable and dirty. Curiously enough, when we cooked some of his meat that night, the odour that might have been associated with his exterior appearance seemed to pervade his tissues. Miserable and thin all the dogs were when they reached this stage of starvation. The dog-meat was tough, stringy, and without body or any trace of fat. We ate it either roughly frizzled over the Primus flame or finely chopped, mixed with a little pemmican, and brought to the boil in a large pot of water. We by no means ate our fill, for each dog yielded but little, and the major part of the animal was fed to the survivors. They cracked the bones and ate the skin; nothing remained.

A start was made again at 7.30 p.m. on the evening of December 17th, and a wretched, trying night spent marching until 8 a.m. next day under an overcast sky with occasional falls of snow, literally feeling the way along by the buried winter sastrugi. None of the dogs except Ginger gave any help with the load, and Mary gave in and had to be carried on the sledge. Poor Mary had been a splendid dog, and it was with real sorrow that she was disposed of at the morning's camp, to be divided up amongst the remaining dogs and ourselves. The run was eighteen and a half miles. The want of proper food was already making itself felt.

For several succeeding days the course lay over a hard, slippery surface, broken by high sastrugi; all this time the sun was never seen, the sky remaining overcast. A moderate southerly and south-easterly wind swept the snow away to the north as fast as it fell. Stumbling over the invisible sastrugi, slipping and falling on the polished surface, the miles ahead were laboriously reduced. On December 20th we came near losing Haldane, the big grey wolf-dog, in a crevasse. Miserably thin from starvation, the dogs no longer filled their harnesses. As we pulled Haldane up after breaking through a deep, sheer-walled crevasse, he slipped out of his harness just as he reached the top. Fortunately it was possible to seize hold of his hair at that moment and land him safely, else would have been lost many days' rations.

Haldane was then nearly at the end. We dragged him on the sledge for some miles, but he did not revive. When so far gone as he was the dogs were too weak to bite their food. They lay with it between their paws and licked it, but had no strength to bite. Until in that extreme state they were ravenous, and great care had to be taken when tethering them at the camps to prevent them gnawing the woodwork of the sledge, the straps, or, in fact, anything at all. Breaking

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away occasionally, they caused untold trouble by eating the sledge-straps and fur boots.

On December 23rd we found ourselves amongst large crevasses, in heavy falling snow. Though a good daily average had been maintained up till then, the continuance of bad weather and the undoubtedly weaker state in which we ourselves were decided us to abandon everything that could possibly be dispensed with. Thus were thrown away all our instruments except the theodolite, including camera and exposed photographic films. The tent frame was made lighter by constructing two poles, each four feet high, out of the telescopic theodolite legs, discarding the heavier pieces of sledge-runner earlier in use. Pavlova's end came. Her bones were broken up and stewed, making a very acceptable soup, though the marrow contained not a vestige of fat, a substance for which we longed. In view of the dark outlook the food ration had to be still further cut down. In such hunger we got no proper sleep, a dull gnawing sensation gripping us all the time. The question of food was ever in our thoughts. Dozing in the fur bags we dreamt of gorgeous spreads and dinner-parties at home; but tramping along through the snow we racked our brains as to how to make the most use of the meagre supply of dogs'-meat on hand.

Our supply of kerosene promised to be ample, for none had been lost in the accident. It was found that it paid to spend a longer time over the cooking and boil the dogs'-meat thoroughly; thus was prepared a tasty soup and a supply of very welcome and edible meat, in which the dried muscle-tissue and gristle was reduced more or less to the consistency of a jelly. The paws took much the longest time to cook, but treated in this way became quite digestible.



**FROZEN OUT!**

A PENGUIN AFTER A SEVERE BLIZZARD, WITH ITS FEATHERS MATTED TOGETHER WITH ICE.

Christmas morning came round, and with it the sky cleared. Once more in sunlight our spirits rose, though a southerly wind accompanied by low drift took the edge off delight. Looking down the shallow depression of the Ninnis Glacier, the low outline of Dixson Island, forty miles to the north, could be seen miraged up on the horizon. Sighting this old landmark gave us great satisfaction, for though we knew that we could not be far out of our dead reckoning, yet, travelling in thick and overcast weather, it was not possible to steer an absolutely true course.

Camping at 9.30 a.m., we wished each other merrier Christmases in the future, and treated ourselves to an extra portion of dog-stew. At noon I made a latitude observation, and, taking a bearing on to Dixson Island, found that the air-line distance to winter quarters was about one hundred and sixty miles.

Reaching the western side of the Ninnis Glacier, the course was altered to north-west instead of west, as it had been before. This brought the prevailing wind more behind, and in future it was possible to make considerable use of a sail. This consisted in propping up the tent cover by a ski lashed as a mast to the sledge.



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**THE WONDERFUL ANIMAL LIFE**
A HAUNT OF THE WEDDELL SEAL AND THE ADELIE PENGUIN.

For some days after Christmas we were favoured by bright sunlight, but steady light to moderately strong winds continued, accompanied by more or less low drift-snow. The land began to rise steadily and occasional steep slopes were encountered, but the sail helped. With bright sunlight our spirits kept up, though we were uncommonly hungry. Whenever a halt was called for a few minutes to rest, the conversation invariably turned on what we would do on arrival on board the *Aurora* and in civilization. The chances of not reaching winter quarters were never dwelt upon.

The makeshift tent was long, narrow, and low; the floor area just that of two men lying close together, and one could not rise above a sitting position. This hampered our movements and hindered all operations connected with camping.

In sunshine it was comparatively warm within the tent. The addition of the heat from the Primus, kept burning for an unusually long time preparing the meat, caused thawing of the drift-snow lodged on the lee side of the tent. Thus we had frequently to put up with an unwelcome drip. Moisture came from the floor also. In this way the sleeping-bags became wet and disagreeable.

As soon as cooking was over the tent cooled and the wet walls froze, caked and stiff with ice.

At this time we were eating largely of the dog-meat, washed down by very dilute cocoa. Added to this were one or two ounces of chocolate or raisins, three or four ounces of mixed pemmican and biscuit per day, to give value to what otherwise was chiefly useful as filling. The total weight of solid food consumed per man per day was probably about fourteen ounces. A little butter and Glaxo were saved for emergency.

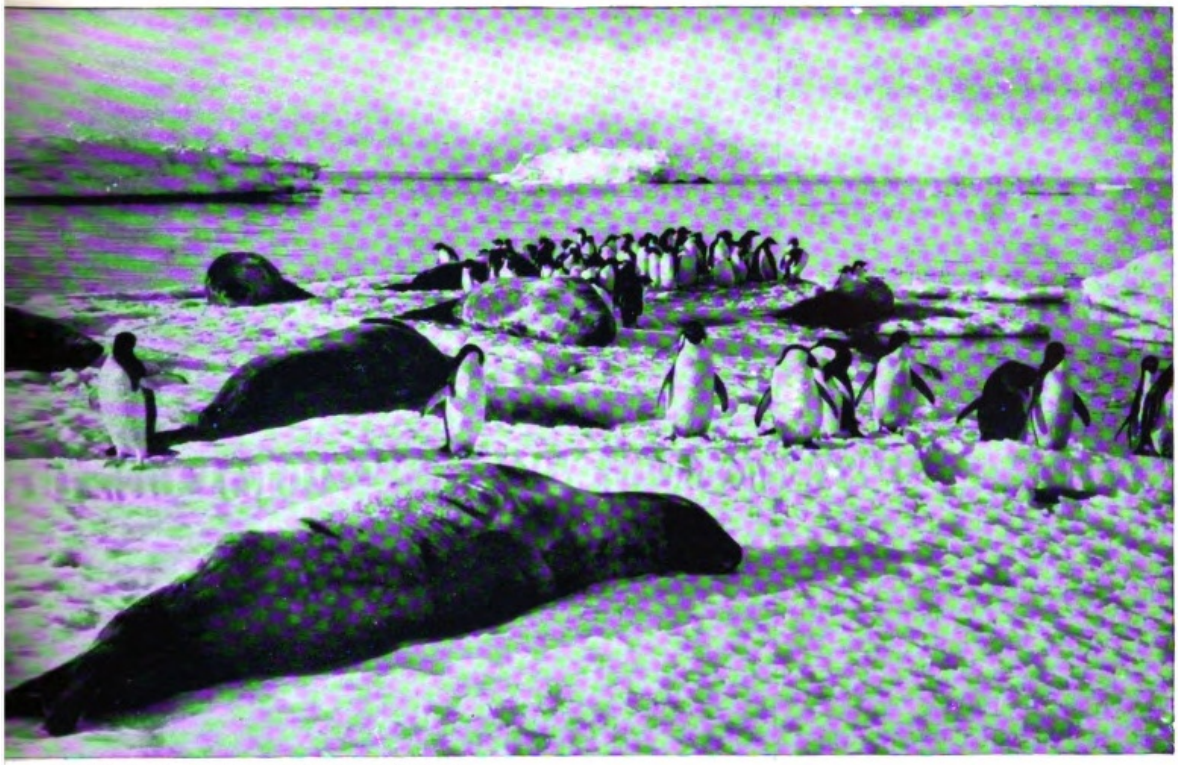
On December 27th, after the regular dog-meat supper, we indulged in the luxury of half a biscuit and three-quarters of an ounce of butter, washed down with dilute tea, the latter none the less welcome for its being the fifth time of boiling the old leaves.

### Drawing Lots for Food by "Shut-Eye."

On December 28th, Ginger, the last dog, who had held out so well and had been some sort of a help until a few days before, could walk no longer. It was a pitiful thing to finish off so faithful and fine a dog. Quoting my diary: "Had a grand breakfast off Ginger's skull, thyroids, and brain." I well remember the occasion. As there was nothing available to divide it, the skull was boiled whole. Then the right and left halves were drawn for by the old and well-established sledging practice of "shut-eye,"* after which

* On sledging journeys it is usual to apportion all foodstuffs in as nearly even portions as possible; then one man turns away and another, pointing to a heap, asks, "Whose?" The reply from the one not looking comes "Yours" or "Mine" as the case may be. Thus an impartial and satisfactory division of the food is effected. This method was adopted throughout our journey.

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**OF THE ANTARCTIC REGIONS.**
AMONGST THE MACKELLAR ISLETS, OFF ADELIE LAND.

we took it in turns, passing it from one to the other, eating back to the middle line. The brain was scooped out with the wooden spoon.

**Mertz Shows Signs of Breaking Down.**

That day, after an unusually large breakfast of dogs'-meat, I felt in good form for travelling, but Mertz was not his usual bright self. I was at a loss to know why, for that day the wind was very favourable, and we cut out fifteen miles on an uphill track, and were again at an elevation of about three thousand feet above sea-level, having fallen to some fifteen hundred feet when crossing the Ninnis Glacier.

Heavy snow commenced to fall on December 31st, and for days wretched weather prevailed, seriously hindering progress. Mertz stated that he felt that the dogs'-meat was not doing him much good, and suggested that we should give it up for a time and eat a small ration of the ordinary sledging food only, of which we still had some days' supply carefully husbanded. It tasted very sweet compared with the dogs'-meat, but the ration was so small that it left one painfully empty.

Several days slipped by in which, on account of thick drift, camp was not broken. Mertz was not up to his usual form, and thought that in the long run the rest would be advantageous. He did not complain at all, except of the dampness of his sleeping-bag. Questioned particularly, he admitted pains in the abdomen. As I had a continuous gnawing sensation in the stomach, I took it that he had the same, possibly more acute. However, after January 1st he expressed a dislike to biscuit, which seemed rather strange. Later he expressed a desire for Glaxo, and our small store was turned over to him, I taking a considerable ration of the dogs'-meat in exchange. It was no use, however, for when we tried to cover a few more miles the exertion told very heavily on him, and it was plain that he was in a more serious condition than myself. On January 6th, after much persuasion, Mertz agreed to try another stage, for the weather was better than it had been for some days. The grade was slightly downhill, the wind well behind, and there was almost no drift in the air, though the sky was overcast. Unfortunately, the surface was slippery, and it was not possible, on account of the light, to make out the irregularities of the surface, and so falls were frequent. These told very much on my companion, and, after consistently demurring, he at last consented to ride on the sledge. With the wind behind it required no great exertion to bring the load along, though it often pulled up short suddenly against sastrugi. After covering three and a half miles my companion had got so cold by inaction in the wind that there was nothing

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to do but pitch the tent. He was evidently very much depressed, though little was said beyond a discussion on the subject of London restaurants.

We were then about one hundred miles south-east of the hut, where food and plenty awaited us. How short a distance it seems to the vigorous, but what a lengthy journey for weak and famished men!

The skin was peeling off us both all over, and a very poor apology took its place, which burst readily and rubbed raw in many places. The day before I remember Mertz ejaculating, "Just a moment," and, reaching over, lifted from my ear a perfect skin-cast. On investigation I was able to do the same for him. As we never took our clothes off, the peelings of skin and hair from our bodies worked down into the bottom of our under-trousers and socks, and regular clearances were made.

During the night I made the following note in my diary: "A long and wearisome night. If only I could get on—but I must stop with Xavier, and he does not appear to be improving. Both our chances are going now."

January 7th.—"Up at 8 a.m., it having been arranged last night that we would go on to-day at all costs, sledge-sailing, with Xavier in his bag on the sledge." It was a sad blow to find that Mertz was in a weak state and required helping in and out of his bag. A few hours' longer rest at least appeared necessary before any travelling could be undertaken. "I have to turn in again also to kill time and keep warm—for I feel the cold very much now."



ALONE IN THE ANTARCTIC! THE COM-
IN THE BACKGROUND WILL BE SEEN THE GRAVE OF DR. HALF-RUNNERS

### I Lose My Comrade.

"At 10 a.m. I get up to dress Xavier and prepare food, but find him in a kind of fit." Coming round a few minutes after, he exchanged a few words, and did not seem to realize that anything had happened. "Obviously we can't go on to-day, and it is a good day though bad light, the sun just gleaming through the clouds. This is terrible. I don't mind for myself, but for others. I pray to God to help us."

"I cook some thick cocoa for Xavier and give him beef-tea (dog-broth). He is better after noon, but very low. I have to lift him up to drink."

During the afternoon he had several more fits, then became delirious and talked incoherently until midnight, when he appeared to fall off into a peaceful slumber, so I toggled up the sleeping-bag and retired, worn-out, into my own. After a couple of hours, having felt no movement from my companion, I stretched out an arm and found that he was stiff.

My comrade had been accepted into "the peace that passeth all understanding." It was my fervent hope that, shaking off the fetters that held him in the inexorable icy grip of the Antarctic plateau, he had passed to where sterling qualities and a high mind would receive their due reward. In his life we loved him, in his death we honoured him.

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**MENCEMENT OF THE SOLITARY JOURNEY.**
MERTZ, MARKED BY A ROUGH CROSS MADE OF TWO OF A SLEDGE.

### Alone!

For hours I lay in the bag rolling over in my mind all that lay behind and the chance of the future.

My condition was such that I might go off rapidly at any time. The gnawing in the stomach had developed there a permanent weakness, so that it was not possible to hold myself up in certain positions. Several of my toes began to blacken at the tips and the nails worked loose.

The weather remained abominable. Alone, to break and pitch camp in the winds and to negotiate the crevassed region of the Mertz Glacier ahead was a doubtful undertaking. Weak as I was, there seemed but little hope of reaching the hut. On the other hand, I felt that I must go on to the end, for it is inaction that is so hard to brook. Failing reaching the hut, a good work would be accomplished if only a point likely to catch the eye of any search-party could be reached, a cairn erected, and our diaries cached. Determined to make every effort to accomplish one or other of these objects, I commenced, when the day had advanced considerably, to modify the sledge and camping gear so as to most efficiently meet the demands of a one-man sledging enterprise.

The sky remained overcast, but the wind fell off till it became almost calm for several hours. This gave a chance to get to work on the sledge, sawing it in halves with a pocket tool, rigging a mast, spar, etc. The spade was re-mended and a sail made from a food-bag and Mertz's Burberry jacket. Later in the day I took Mertz's body, wrapped up in his sleeping-bag, outside the tent, piled snow-blocks around him, and raised a rough cross made of two half-runners of the sledge. "I have more than the usual ration to eat to-day, in the hope that it will give me strength for the future."

"One annoying effect of want of food is that wherever the surface breaks it refuses to heal—the nose and lips break open."

On January 9th the weather was overcast and fairly thick, drift flying in a wind reaching about fifty miles per hour. There were still matters that wanted attending to, and the chances were doubtful of ever getting the awkward tent up again in such a wind. Hour after hour I racked my brains for dodges to facilitate operations and make up for my helplessness in striking and pitching camp unaided in the prevailing winds. In this I was eventually successful, but at what a cost of time on each occasion!

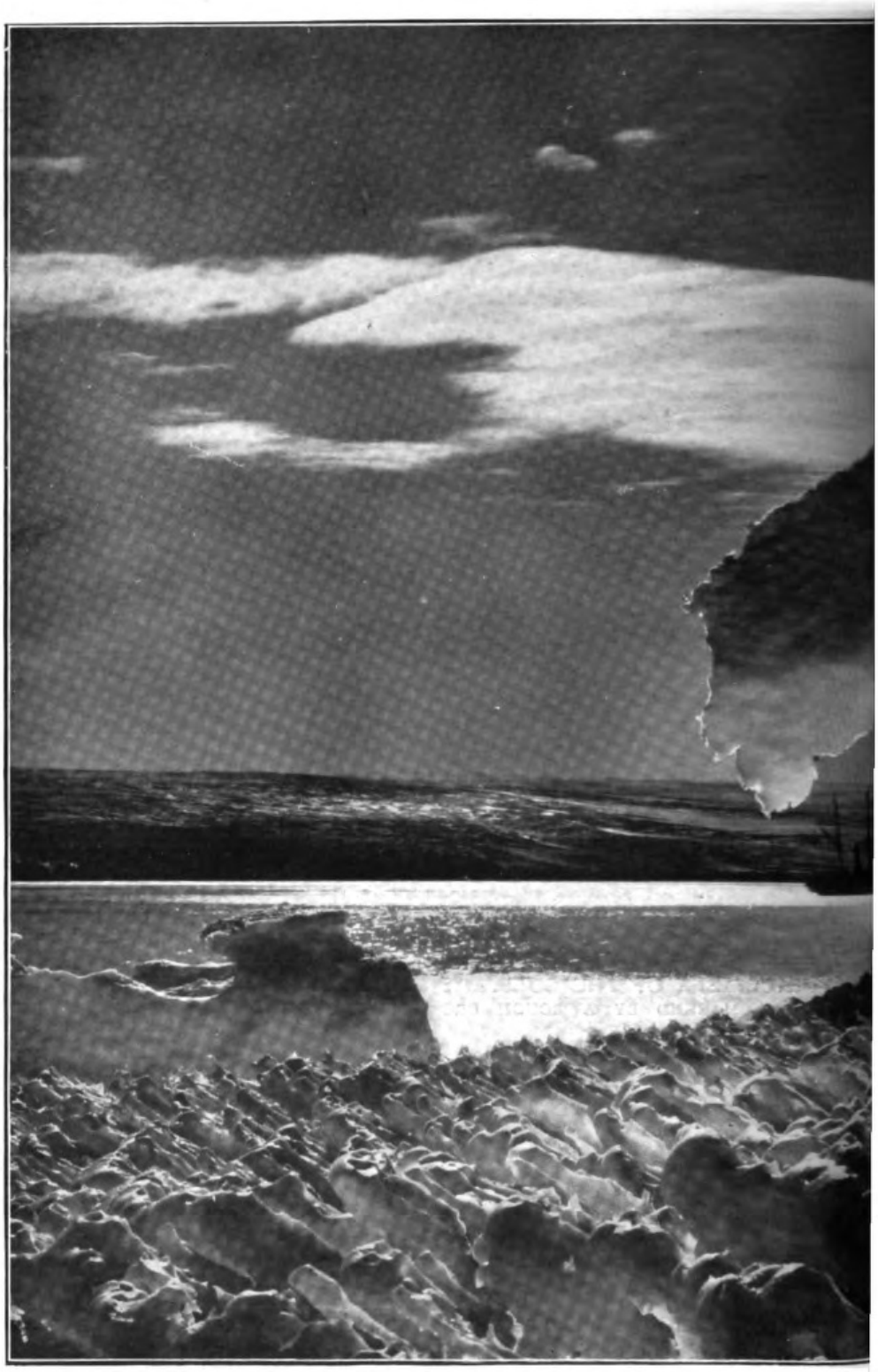
"I read the Burial Service over Xavier this afternoon. As there is little chance of my reaching human aid alive, I greatly regret inability at the moment to set out the detail of coast-line met with for three hundred miles travelled and observations on glacier and ice formations, etc., the most of which latter is, of course, committed to my head."

"The approximate position of this camp is latitude 68° 2′, longitude 145° 9′. This is dead reckoning, as the theodolite legs have been out of action for some time, splinted together to form tent props. I believe the

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truth lies nearer latitude 67° 57′, longitude 145° 20′, as the wind must have drifted us to the north."

January 10th was an impossible travelling day, on account of thick drift and high wind, so the time was spent in carefully counting over the food and cooking all the remainder of the dog-meat, in order to save carrying unnecessary kerosene. Late in the afternoon the wind fell and the sun peered through the clouds; but it caught me in the middle of a long job riveting and lashing the broken shovel, so it happened that camp was unbroken till the following day.



**THE BEAUTIES OF THE ANTARCTIC—** THE S.Y. "AURORA" AT ANCHOR IN COMMONWEALTH BAY, ADELIE LAND. THE SPRAY DASHED UP

**Skinless Legs.**

January 11th was a beautiful, calm, sun-shiny day. The surface was good and slightly downhill. From the start my feet felt very lumpy and sore. After covering a mile they had become so painful that I decided to make an examination of them on the spot. It being a still, sunny day, it was possible to do this sitting on the sledge. The sight gave me quite a shock, for the skin, thickened by habitually walking only in fur boots, had separated. In each case a complete cast was shed, and abundant watery fluid had escaped into the socks. In the absence of nutriment no adequate under-skin had formed. The frail tissue was everywhere abraded and raw.

I did what appeared to be best in the

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A MIDSUMMER MIDNIGHT EFFECT.

REMARKABLE ICE FORMATION IN THE FOREGROUND IS THE RESULT OF FREEZING IN THE HURRICANES.

circumstances—smeared them well with lanoline, of which, fortunately, there was a good store, and with bandages lashed the skin-casts back in place, as they were comfortable and soft to touch the raw surface. Above this I wore six pairs of thick woollen socks, fur boots, and a soft leather overshoe. Then I removed most of my clothing and bathed in the glorious sunshine. A tingling sensation spread throughout my body, and I felt stronger every minute.

Sunshine is the elixir of life for those who have been without it for weeks in the snows and winds of the Antarctic plateau.

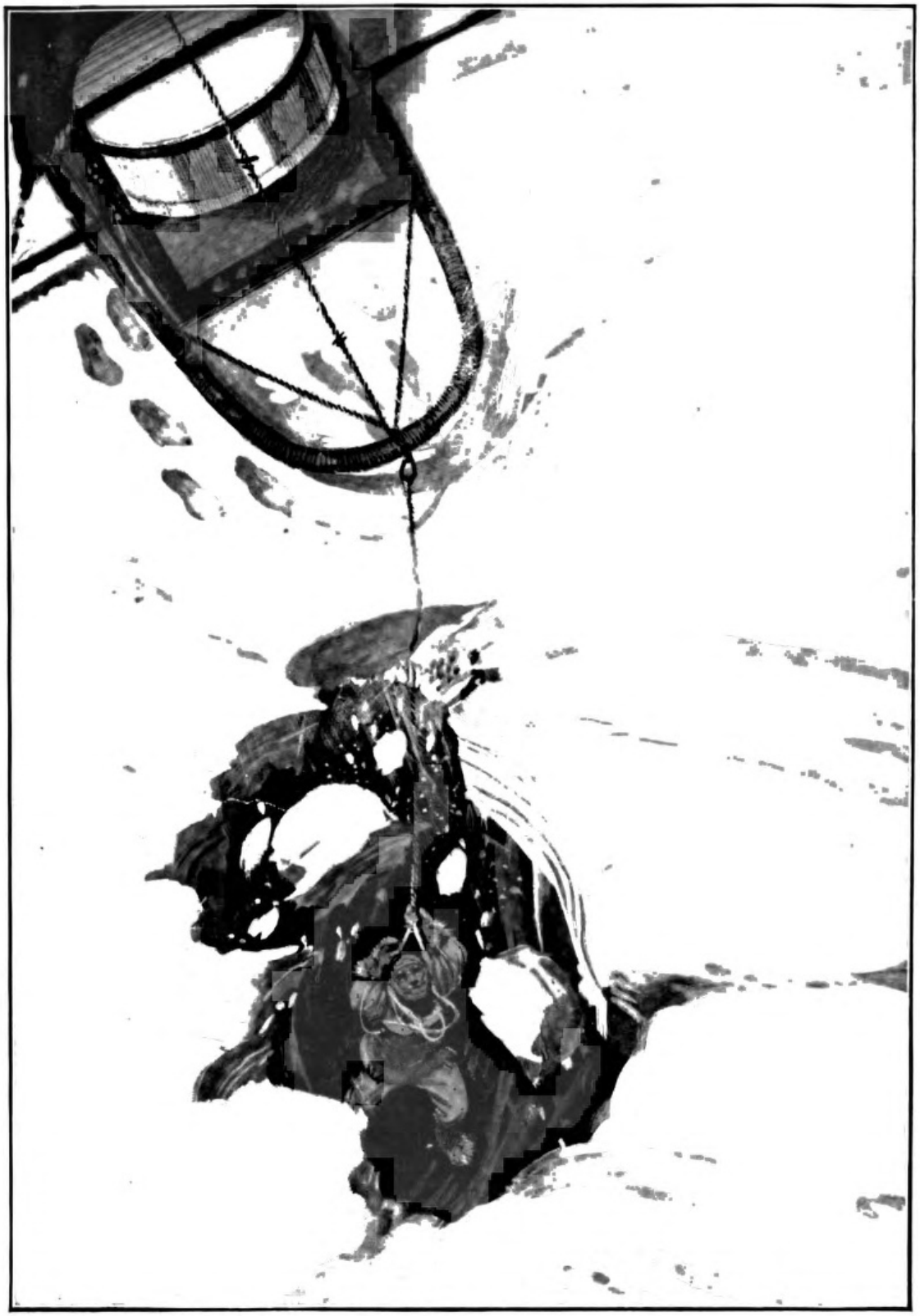
When starting that day in such ideal weather I had thought to accomplish more; but after six and a quarter miles, at 5.30 p.m., I felt nerve-worn and had to camp, "so worn that had it not been a delightful evening could not have found strength to erect the tent."

The following day strong wind and thick drift prevailed.

On the 13th camp was broken again in good weather, and a slow descent made over a rough crevassed blue ice surface into the valley of the Mertz Glacier.

"Descended hard ice-slopes over crevasses, etc.—almost all descent—but surface cut my feet up. At 8 p.m. camped, having done only five and three-quarter miles. Painful feet—on camping find feet worse than ever. Things

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**THE FIGHT FOR LIFE IN A CREVASSE.**

look bad, but shall persevere. It is now 11 p.m., and the glacier is firing off like artillery—appears to send up great jets of imprisoned air."

The next day the bed of the glacier was reached. Fifteen miles away, across the valley occupied by crevassed and ridged ice, the slopes could be seen rising to the plateau in the direction of winter quarters. Away to the north Aurora Peak, a landmark on the outward journey, was visible.

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### A Fight for Life in a Crevasse.

The crossing of the Mertz Glacier took some days, during which time the sky remained overcast and snow fell in frequent showers. The soft surface underfoot was very comfortable for the sore feet, but made the sledge-dragging immensely heavy. There were many providential escapes from crevasses, the most remarkable occurring on January 17th. On that occasion I had gone a couple of miles in light falling snow, and had "escaped several large, open crevasses, not seeing them until right upon them or grazing past. I blundered blindly on. Then, going up a long, fairly steep slope, deeply covered with soft snow, broke through lid of crevasse, but caught myself at thighs—got out—turned fifty yards to the north, then attempted cross trend of crevasse, there being no indication thereof. A few moments later was dangling fourteen feet below on end of rope in crevasse—sledge creeping to mouth. Had time to say to myself, 'So this is the end,' expecting every moment the sledge to crash on my head and both of us go to the bottom unseen below—then thought of the food uneaten on sledge—but as the sledge pulled up without letting me down, thought of Providence again giving me a chance."

### Face to Face with Death.

The chance was very small, considering my weak condition. The width of the crevasse was about six feet, so that I hung freely in space, turning slowly round. A great effort brought me to a knot in the rope, and after a moment's rest I was able to reach another, and then the top just below the overhanging snow-lid into which the rope had cut. Then, when gently climbing out on to the surface, a further section of the lid gave way, precipitating me once more to the full length of the rope. Exhausted, weak, and chilled (for my hands were bare and pounds of snow had got inside my clothes), I hung with the firm conviction that all was over except the passing. Below was a black chasm; it would be but the work of a moment to slip from the harness, and then all the pain and toil would be over. It was a rare situation—a rare temptation, a chance to quit small things for great—to pass from the petty exploration of a planet to the vaster unknown beyond. But there was all eternity for that, and at its longest the present would be but short. I felt better for the thought.

My strength was fast ebbing; in a few minutes it would be too late. It was the occasion for a supreme effort. New strength seemed to come to my assistance as I addressed myself to one last tremendous attempt. The struggle occupied some time, but by a miracle brought me safely to the surface. This time I emerged feet first, still holding on to the rope, and pushed myself out extended at full length over the snow-bridge. The solid ground was reached.

### "Plugging On."

Then the reaction was so great that I could do nothing for quite an hour. After that the tent was erected in slow stages and finally food prepared. Later on I lay in the sleeping-bag thinking things over. The problem that absorbed me for a time was whether it was better to enjoy life for a day or two sleeping and eating my fill until the provisions gave out, or to plug on again in hunger with the prospect of any moment plunging into eternity without the great luxury of consuming the food. At this stage an idea presented itself that greatly improved the prospects. A length of Alpine rope was available, and out of this a rope-ladder was made, one end of which was attached to the bow of the sledge, the other carried over my left shoulder and loosely attached to the sledge-harness.

The following day snow continued to fall, but, buoyed up by the safety-ladder, camp was broken as usual and I continued with the very eventful journey across the glacier.

It ended successfully, thanks to the ladder, for on three occasions I was precipitated the length of my harness rope into crevasses, but climbed out easily by ascending the safety device. Fortunately the sledge never followed, owing, no doubt, in large measure to the fact that soft snow lay very deep on the ground, often as deep as one's knees.

The western side of the glacier was reached before noon on January 19th. Ahead were steep, snow-covered slopes, up which a laborious climb was commenced the following day.

### Sledge-Sailing.

Every ounce that it was possible to do without was discarded from the load. Amongst other things left by the way were the rope-ladder and crampons. Fortunately the wind was of considerable assistance at this stage. With full sail set and the lightest possible load a few miles' progress was made each day notwithstanding the up-grade. The sky remained densely overcast, and it snowed heavily most of the time. For some days vision was limited to a few yards, for dense driving snow filled the whole atmosphere.



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In such winds, on each occasion quite a long distance was covered, for, with sail set, little energy was required to keep the sledge going. It was when camping-time came that the greatest difficulty had to be faced—that of erecting the tent single-handed, with the wind tearing savagely at it.

By January 27th the crest of the plateau was reached, an ascent of quite two thousand five hundred feet in the week. A high blizzard was raging, the snow falling in large round pellets, to be compacted by the wind. In a single day the whole surface of the plateau thereabouts had been raised two and a half feet. The new surface was quite good to sledge over, the runners making but little impression.

Bad weather, added to the inadequate ration, was beginning to tell again—patches of beard came out, and every day hair strewed the floor of the tent and even became a nuisance in the hoosh.

### Saved!

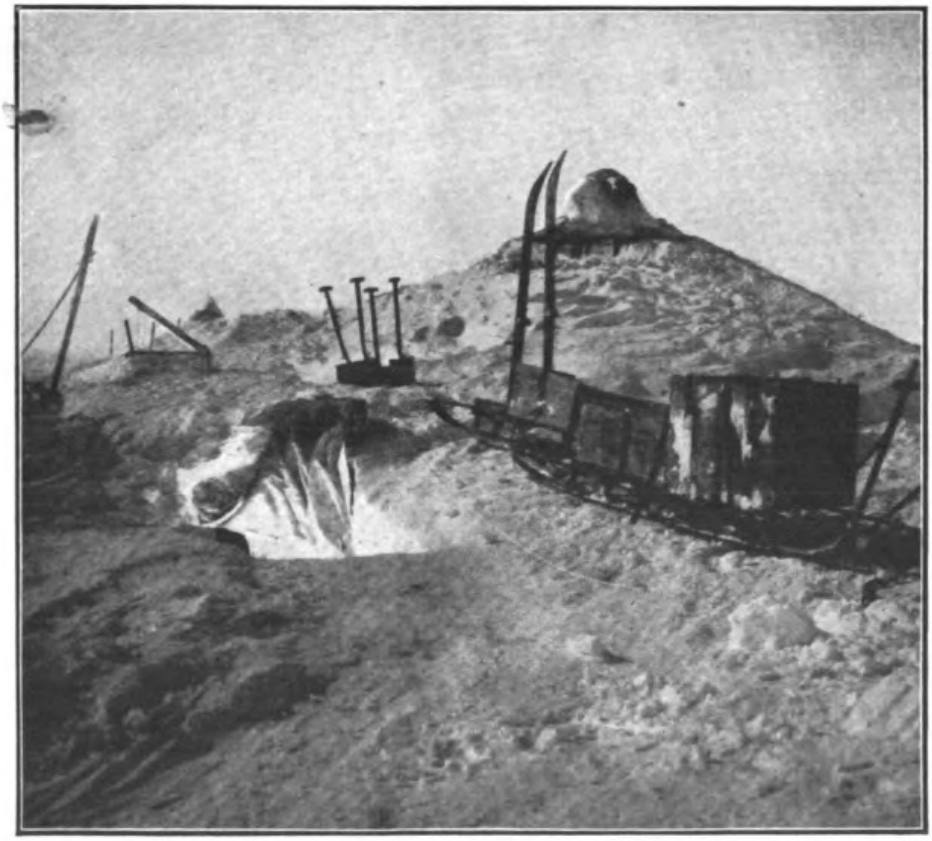
Miraculous good fortune came on January 29th. On that day, with a good wind helping and considerable drift in the air, whilst travelling along on an even slow down-grade, something dark loomed through the drift a little to the right. All sorts of possibilities fled through my mind as the sledge was headed for it. The unexpected happened—it was a cairn erected by McLean, Hodgeman, and Hurley, who had been out searching for us. And on top of the mound was a bag of food, left on the off-chance of its being met!

With it was a note stating that the ship had arrived at the hut and was waiting, that Amundsen had reached the Pole, and that Scott was remaining another year in Antarctica.

And so the marvel had happened and I had escaped alive!

With plenty of food I immediately felt stimulated and revived, and anticipated reaching the hut in a day or two, for there was then not more than twenty miles to cover. Alas, however, there was to be another delay, for without crampons, and in the wind prevailing, I was not able to stand up on the slippery ice of the coastal slopes. Eventually a pair of makeshift crampons were constructed from the case of the theodolite, employing also nails and screws out of the sledge fittings.

Thus Aladdin's Cave was reached. A strong blizzard intervened. Descending the ice-slope to the hut on February 8th the *Aurora* was visible on the horizon, outward bound.



**THE WESTERN BASE HUT IN THE WINTER.**

NOTE THE ENTRANCE—A VERTICAL HOLE IN THE SNOW, IN THE FOREGROUND. THE PEAK OF THE MOUND IS THE CHIMNEY.

### Final Remarks.

It appeared that Captain Davis had hung on in a hurricane for days after he was due to leave to pick up the western party under Wild. In this difficult situation Captain Davis had acted thoroughly well. At the hut were six men who had volunteered to

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spend another year in the God-forsaken climate of Adelie Land in order to make a thorough search for the missing party. They were Madigan, Bage, McLean, Bickerton, Hodgeman, of the former year, for all of whom I had the greatest regard, and Jeffryes, a promising new wireless operator.

All the other sledging parties had returned after very successful journeys.

Bage, Webb, and Hurley had gone southward three hundred miles over the plateau, reaching an elevation of six thousand feet. Madigan, McLean, and Correll, travelling farther to the north, had gone nearly as far east as my own party. Their travelling had been chiefly over the frozen sea and great floating glacier tongues. Nearer the base more detailed scientific work had been accomplished.

Captain Davis, after a hazardous voyage, was successful in relieving the western base. There Wild and his seven companions had spent a very profitable year, mapping in a large area of new land now called Queen Mary Land. To relate all their adventures would occupy much space; their story must be reserved for another time.

The following year, in the summer of 1913-14, Captain Davis came south a third time, relieving the Macquarie Island party on the way, and picking up us seven in Adelie Land. Before returning, an extended oceanographic programme in Antarctic waters was completed, including a wide range of deep-sea dredgings, which resulted in the discovery of much new and strange animal life. Adelaide was reached on February 26th, after an absence from civilization of two years and three months.



**IN MEMORIAM.**

THE CROSS ERECTED AT CAPE DENISON IN MEMORY OF LIEUT. NINNIS AND DR. MERTZ.



**J. K. DAVIS,**

MASTER OF S.Y. "AURORA," AND SECOND IN COMMAND OF THE EXPEDITION.



**FRANK WILD,**

COMMANDING WESTERN BASE.



**G. F. AINSWORTH,**

COMMANDING MACQUARIE ISLAND BASE.

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# An Ounce of Civet

By G. B Lancaster
*Illustrated by Norah Schlegel*

SHADOWS clung to the room-corners, quivering grey on grey walls and exquisite cool-tinted pictures and pale curtains, and through the open windows night showed, laden with jasmine breath and sown with stars to the north where the city lights burned fainter. The ruddy-coloured maid, striking a note of young life as she moved, brought coffee—a single cup with its little silver appurtenances—and set it on a table near the window, pushing up a cushioned chair beside it. Then she went away, seeming to take the warmth and vigour with her, and in that hush of a room which never forgets that the reare empty rooms beyond it Evelyn Guinness crossed to the table and began to pour the coffee.

One cup. On all the anniversaries until this there had been two, and two only. And it had been meant that there should be two for ever. Roger and she, fond fools that they were, had planned that when the first cycle of their married months came round, and even to-night she had been prepared to face the same ghastly juggling with sentiment again. But Roger had had mercy. Or perhaps he had forgotten. She did not know, and, stirring her coffee slowly, she knew that she did not care. Then she sank down into the cushioned chair, a gentle, indeterminate figure, from which all the brilliant life and merriment had gradually ebbed away.

There was no struggle in her such as breeds a healthy anger or a bracing wind of humour. One does not struggle against the elemental powers, and it was those powers which had failed herself and Roger. Life had failed them. Love had failed them. And now the one was gone, leaving the other stark and terrible behind it, and yet clothed still with anxious care in the wrappings of old tendernesses. There was the shame of it. She and Roger played the game still; played it as thousands of men and women play it every day; played it for the sake of self-respect, knowing secretly that it stripped self-respect from them. There was the shame of it, and the piteous glory; for they burnt incense still to the empty shrine in order to hide it from the world's eyes—and from the eyes of each other. Love was gone, but the world knew them as lovers yet, and they knew themselves—as what? Cowards, or heroes?

Evelyn folded her bare, slender arms on the table and looked out into the night. She had ceased her silent woman-revolt against conditions which had seemed too great for her, but she could not accept her life and live it. She had found no "ounce of civet to sweeten the imagination"; no subtle ways through which to win back that which she had lost. Love was dead; killed by no sordidness of a shadowy third, no vulgar quarrels and frictions. It had just worn out in these seven years; rubbed through, perhaps, by the very closeness of those thousand intimate ties with which she and Roger had bound themselves so exultantly; snowed under by the very fervour of those old terms of endearment which still came so glibly to the tongue. Excess of love had killed love, and neither would confess it. Each had been so careful for sake of the other. Each had pretended so foolishly and so valiantly. And now each was guarding a dust-heap—and knew it—and would not confess.

Round the window clambered the little yellow jasmine-points—fragile things—fragile

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as that great mystery which breathes on a man's heart and on a woman's, fusing life to a blinding glory where they grope, clinging to each other—while it lasts. And then, it seems, they finish the road alone.

Evelyn leaned out and drew the flowers softly against her lips. She did all things softly now, with a sense of detachment, as though she no longer quite belonged to life, but was etched on some background of it in delicate silver-point. Colour and glow were past for her. Love rang no more bells for her feet to dance to; neither humour nor defiance brought keen shafts to stab that subtle ghoul which was sucking out her life-blood. For none was to blame. Roger had given her no hot ploughshares to tread over—no poisoned waters to drink. But love was gone, and the clever juggling with the husks of what had once been hallowed things mocked her—oh, mocked unspeakably. If only they had loved less at the first! If only there had been fewer intimacies to break! If only Roger had been other than the patient, kindly "good fellow" that he was! If only——

"If only there had been children we would still have loved each other," she said. But she said it indifferently, as though repetition had killed sense.

She rose presently, moving through the shaded room, with its delicate gradations of soft odours and tones. Her own frail personality quivered in it. There was no strong note of masculine life, no suggestion of winds blowing through open spaces. A sense of apathy was on this house and on the gentle dweller in it, and from all sides ghosts rose up, and yet she could not slay them. She could not slay them because they did not hurt enough, and there lay the hopelessness of it. She had deadened herself into this half-life because revolt would be terrible, unthinkable. It needs a special courage to break free when, ranged in dim threat against you, stand duty, and law, and—custom.

Down in the hall a door banged, and she turned with a faint feverish flush rushing to her face.

"The coffee is cold," she said, under her breath. "Oh, it is cold. He won't ask for it now. He has surely forgotten."

A man's heavy step sounded on the stair, and she ran to turn the lights up, and to smooth her dark, soft hair. The old motley must go on again, and again they must play their farce—she and this man. The door opened, and she crossed the room with a welcoming flutter, putting her hands on his shoulders and holding up her face.

"Why, here you are at last, dear!" she cried.

The years which had sapped her had broadened and strengthened Guinness. He looked a man who, with a certain quiet stolidity, was making his way in life; a kindly man, with reserves and a tolerant outlook and very few complexities. He kissed his wife dutifully; but he did not put his arm about her as was usual with him, nor did he ask her what she had been doing all the day.

"I made Lacey let me off early," he said. "How hot it is in here!"

He walked over to the window, dragging the curtains back, and her eyes followed him. He had not called her "Evie," and he had not looked at her as he spoke. Her sensitiveness felt the vibration of something unusual in him, but she smiled, meaninglessly, as she seemed to do all things now.

"How nice of you to come back early when you knew I'd be alone!" she said. "I am afraid the coffee will be cold, but there are liqueurs here—or a soda."

"No, thanks," he said, absently.

She went to the little cabinet from which, year by year, she had brought him the wedding gift chosen with such care, and had received gratitude and kisses, and had returned both duly on the presentation of his own gift. She had not dared shirk the formula this year, and she knew that he would not. This was part of the grim joke, so near to sordidness, which life had played on them both.

"Do you remember what day this is?" she asked, playfully. "Confess that you don't, and then apologize. But look here first, and tell me if this isn't the cutest inkpot you have ever seen."

She held it up, and Guinness looked past it to her delicate face, thinned a little at the temples, and bearing the stamp of inner strain. A sweet face it was still, although the soul that once had shone from it was faded. A sweet face, and yet one which could move him no more. That knowledge had burnt into his heart like a searing-iron; for if Evelyn had bent before this thing which both so loathed, the man had not. Step by step rebellion had goaded him up to the place where he stood now, and from that place he spoke.

"Thank you," he said, and took the little silver thing in his hands. "Thank you. It is very pretty." He laid it down, looking straight at her. "I have not brought you anything, Evelyn," he said.

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He saw relief flash over her face. Kisses and protestations would not be needed, then. The shadow of doubt, of uneasiness, followed, and then he took her arm, putting her gently down into the big cushioned chair.

"I came home specially to talk to you to-night," he said. "I don't want to be brutal or—or unjust; but I'm afraid that what I have to say can't help hurting us both. And yet it is better to say it."

"Yes?" she said only; but keener eyes would have seen a faint contraction of her body, as though she dimly feared the coming hurt.

"I am not making reproaches or apologies," he said. "I do not know that there are any to be made. We have both done our best, I think. It is not our fault if our best was not enough."

His voice was quiet, and he leaned against the window, a well-set-up man in easy circumstances and long past the ebb and flow of youth. But there was trouble in him, and impatience at himself and at her. A wider range, a flash of humour, would have lightened life for them both. And yet he knew well that neither could bring it.

"I think it is better to say it," he repeated, almost coldly. "We are tired of each other, Evelyn. Isn't that the truth?"

Her thin limbs seemed to contract a little more. Faint colour showed on her face.

"Yes," she said, very low.

"This is no uncommon thing," he said. "It happens to many people. Our mistake has been in not allowing that it has happened to us. We have tried to imagine that it has not happened. We have tried more than we should, and so we have weakened our self-respect and mocked at common sense."

"Yes," she whispered again.

"It—perhaps it is not easy to allow that one's married life has been a failure. But there it is. The brain works clearer as the senses get more into line, and all those things which once meant so much to us—we should have buried them decently, Evelyn, before we debased them into parrot-tricks."

"People keep the tricks," she cried, clinging now to that which she had longed to lose. "They must. One can't live otherwise. We must have the outward observances."

"Outward observances," he said, dryly. "Just so. 'A kiss is but a kiss now, and no wave of a great flood that whirls me to the sea.'"

"Ah!" she cried, and for the first time in years a poignant dart struck beneath her armour. "Don't quote that! Those two misunderstood, but they loved still They were not as we are, tired of each other—tired of each other——"

"No; they were not as we are. Don't cry, please." He controlled himself with an effort. This thing was harder for a woman. Of course, it was always harder for a woman. "I should have spoken long ago," he said. "This has been gruelling you badly, Evelyn."

"Oh, if you had! I—I didn't know. I thought I was being a good wife. I——"

"And I thought I was being a good husband. Humiliating, isn't it? We must try to find a way out now. And first we must understand that we can't degrade the past any longer by pretending that it is the present."

"You mean—do you mean that you want to separate?" she asked, very low.

He shrugged impatiently. This was so like Evelyn—this meek self-sacrifice, this inept way of coping with a situation. He sat down, leaning across the table to her as though he would force vitality into her by his very nearness. And she looked at the broad square of his shoulders against the stars and trembled a little. She dreaded the possible kindling again of that spark of poignant pain which she had spent barren years in damping out.

"No," he said; "I don't want separation yet, at any rate. Do you?"

"No; oh, no. I only want—not to feel any more, I think. And I could not bear anything public."

"Ah, but it may come," he said. "We are ordinary man and woman, Evelyn, and we have the ordinary longings for sympathy and love and understanding. Human nature can't do without those things. They are the lares and penates of our souls. We have got to realize that we must have them, and that if we are denied them at home we will probably, sooner or later, go and look for them elsewhere."

"Oh, no, no," she cried, and this time the barbed dart brought her to sit upright with pale hands pressed together and sensitive face flushing.

"We have got to face the chance of it," said the man.

"You might. I could not."

"My dear girl, we are both human." He tapped the table with impatient fingers. If Evelyn had not put love and all its belongings on such a pedestal, they might have never stood where they did now. "Our mistake all through has been in burking facts. We have been trying to delude ourselves into the belief

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that we are still in heaven, whereas we know privately that we have simply been in hell."

She bowed her head in silence. He looked at her steadily.

"I don't know how you feel about it," he said. "I feel that we deserve to be pilloried. We have been running in a squirrel-cage because others do. Now we are going to get out of it. And as we can hardly hope for heaven again, and I, for one, am sick of hell, I propose that we try to find a middle place."

His voice was cool and full. As he sat in the light his ruddy colouring and the fleshly lines which had blurred his finer contours seemed to present themselves more strongly, to assert that life was still a warm, vigorous pleasure to him, still instinct with possibilities. Realization of her own starved soul swept over her like a cold shroud. She sprang up, panting, with eyes distended like those of a wild, nervous animal caught between the jaws of some iron trap.

"There is no middle place," she cried. "How can there be? How can there be? We hate each other. Roger, Roger, do you hear? We *hate* each other—you and I! Oh—you and I——"

"Steady! Steady, Evelyn." He was on his feet instantly, with his arms round her shoulders. "Steady—don't knock yourself about. Sit down. Wait till I get some water. That's better——"

She felt his hands and heard his words. Alien hands and words, gentle and kindly, but so far away. Oh, so far away.

"Poor little girl. Poor little Evelyn," he said. "We couldn't help it, could we? And we don't know what's gone wrong with us. We don't know."

She lay still with closed eyes, unspeaking. It seemed to her that they were in the grip of some power stronger than themselves; some grinding, merciless power which used them as it chose. To her, in her piteous finiteness, it seemed that Infinity itself was roaring down on them.

"We don't know," he repeated, looking at her. And then she began to cry.

"It doesn't seem as if this could be—for us," she said, piteously. "Oh, Roger, can it be the same me and the same you? I—I think we have grown into something different—something unnatural."

"I don't think we are unnatural"; a brief smile touched his lips. "But I think we have been fools—cowards, perhaps. And cowardice breeds misery always. Now we have got to drink our wine, Evelyn, although it is the sourer because we have avoided it so long. It is such a thing as this which breaks up many homes, you know. A man and a woman get past the original attraction which brought them together, and they can't or won't try to find a new one. They just go on, blundering towards the almost inevitable cataclysm, or towards apathy, which is, to my mind, worse. There must be passion of some kind to keep the soul alive. You were wrong when you said we hated each other. We don't. It is simply lack of desire; lack of loving. But we do hate the false position which we have let ourselves in for. Some people accept disillusionment and make a dull best of it. I can't—nor you. Perhaps you are too sensitive and I am not sensitive enough." He laughed shortly. "Anyway, we both feel this false position damnable. *Damnable!*"

His voice was quiet, but she felt in it that heat which she had thought burnt out in him until his face just now had proved that life still held its sweets for him.

"Then—what shall we do?" she asked, gently. She was leaving the initiative to him, as she had left it all her life, and this same compliance which he had once adored irritated him now.

"Do? Get up on our feet and face the matter and see what we can do with it. If we can't better it, then——" He was silent, biting his lips. He rose abruptly and began to walk through the room; the pretty, shadowy, ineffectual room, which seemed to give him, for the first time, the key-note of her individuality. It needed heat and the strength of sharp colours, even as Evelyn needed them. But he could not give them because there was no wish in him, no power to do it. He went back to her, speaking slowly.

"There is an inverted order about marriage and the possibilities of married life which the ordinary individual doesn't realize—can't realize, I imagine, until the time has gone by. The usual man and woman are lovers; then they are husband and wife; but very often they never arrive at being comrades. And that is, I think, the only stuff for wear. It is the one relation which can be resolved into the genial philosophy of life. And we have never been comrades, Evelyn."

"No," she said. She was trembling, wistful, like a child cheated of its fairyland and trying dimly to be brave in spite of its heartbreak.

"Then let us try, for six months, perhaps, if it is possible for us to be comrades. We must begin at the beginning—acquaintances,

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"WE HATE EACH OTHER. ROGER, ROGER, DO YOU HEAR? WE HATE EACH OTHER—YOU AND I!"

meeting seldom, and free to come and go without comment or explanation. There is room for us both under this roof, and we can make adequate arrangements about money matters. For the rest, we need not meet unless we choose; but I think we should both honestly attempt to make that acquaintance ripen into friendship, anyway, if possible."

"And then——?" she said, timidly.

"That's for time to say." He shrugged his shoulders. "Shall we try it—for six

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months? It would be wise, perhaps, in order to avoid a deeper breach."

She sat with linked hands and drooped head. The relief had come; and, woman-like, she half-resented it, half-feared it. Then:—

"Tell me all your plan," she said. "I shall be glad to try it. Glad."

He walked through this room of faint perfumes and colours for long after she had left him that night, with the fighting instinct too roused to let him rest. She had never got to the core of life yet, this gentle, passionless wife of his. Perhaps there was not the stamina in her for it. Perhaps the brief powers in her had been burnt out and could never light again. And if that was so he knew very surely that there was shipwreck before them. Life meant much to him—very much—too much. And it seemed to mean so little to Evelyn, so terribly too little. Yet he had the fibre of courage in him, the innate instinct to do the honourable thing.

"But it's a gamble," he said—"a ghastly gamble; and though we have saved ourselves from the naked truth so far we don't know that it won't have to come."

He stood still, a bulky, virile figure in the subdued silence that breathed of Evelyn yet. "A ghastly gamble," he repeated; "and I knew it would be."

Then he walked abruptly to the escritoire and lit a candle. The flame leapt up yellow, blowing sideways with the warm air from the window. He drew a letter from his breast-pocket, and unfolded the closely-written sheets. Then, one by one, with steady hand, he burnt them, swept up the black tinder which fell on the polished wood, and cast it from the window with a quick, decisive gesture.

For a moment he stared after it with his face a little pale, a little drawn about the lips. He had not intended to burn that letter. He had done it under the stress of one of those complex emotions which snatch at a man's will sometimes and betray him—or save him. For a while he stood motionless. Then he turned on his heel with a long sigh, crossed the room with head bent, and put the lights out, leaving the grey, wistful room to the hush of its still shadows.

"No, Betty, I won't allow you another moment. I am sending you both away—at once! Do you hear? Off with you, then! *Allez-vous-en!*"

Evelyn stood in the middle of the room, shaking her head and smiling.

"Do you hear me?" she cried again. "Go away, you two. You certainly are the most difficult tea-party to get rid of that ever I knew."

"We always wait till the hostess turns us out," declared Betty. "It is the correct way now, isn't it, Joe?"

She paused in her banjo-playing to tweak the hair of the youth sunk into the big chair beside her. "Isn't it?" she said again, and went on playing, nodding her pretty head to the music.

"But I have turned you out," said Evelyn. "And you haven't gone."

"There seems a discrepancy about that remark," said Joe. "I doubt if it would stand in a court of law." He smoothed his hair with a slow hand, looking gravely at Evelyn. "I can't see why you want us to go," he said. "We are very nice. Everyone says so. And you are letting Stallard stay."

"Mr. Stallard goes without being told. He has learnt manners."

"Crippling thing for the individuality—manners," observed Joe. He stood up, a big, blond youth wrapped in a perpetual cloak of contented laziness. "Come along, Betty. She doesn't love us any more. And just hint to her that she sha'n't ever pay us a call of more than five hours' duration when we are married."

"My lad, do you imagine that even you and marriage will teach me to stay in the house for five consecutive hours?" retorted Betty. She flung him a glance over her shoulder as she followed Evelyn to the door, a glance full of love and roguish happiness. "Oh, the staggering revelations that are in store for you!" she said.

The door shut, and Joe lit another cigarette, chuckling to himself.

"They'll talk and talk," he said. "Women always do. What a good creature Mrs. Guinness is, Stallard!"

"Yes," said Stallard. He also lit a cigarette, walked to the fire, and dropped the match in. There was an alert finish about his movement which, combined with a certain roughness, puzzled men until they learned that Stallard was in the South African Mounted Police, and had done clever work there for his country. He did not speak again of Evelyn, but when the good-byes were said, and the boy and girl had gone laughing and chattering down the stair, he drew Evelyn's low chair nearer to the fire, and his voice held that note of mastery which seldom escaped it.

"Eleven," he said. "And you said you could only give me until half-past."



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"I expect Roger then. He wanted to speak to me particularly to-night."

Stallard leaned on the mantel, looking down at her in her deep chair. She had slipped off the gay hostess manner, and the worn, sweet woman beneath it showed with an unconscious simplicity which contracted his heart while it roused him. She was all nerves and harmonies, too finely blent for happiness.

"You have tired yourself out—as usual," he said, in reproof.

"Don't praise me for it! I love them, the dear things. They are so very sure that they have plumbed the heights and depths of life."

He did not answer; and, although silences were not rare between them, she felt a constraint in this one, an unpleasantly vivid realization of his virility and strong will. She stirred uneasily.

"I think you said you had something to tell me?" she suggested.

"Yes." He wheeled, striking her directly with look as well as words. "Yes. I am due to go back to South Africa next week."

"I am sorry," she said, conventionally. Then she flushed a little. "I am very sorry. I shall miss you."

The man bit his lip. How deadened her spirit was yet, hiding itself from love and pain in its frail world of shadows.

"And I shall miss you," he said, boldly. "You should come to Africa yourself," he went on, and the eager masterfulness put glow and colour to his words. "There is no place like it. Men and women live there. They *live!* You don't live here, you know. Blood turns to water in cramped spaces. Think of yourself with the wind blowing against your face across a thousand miles of open country, and the sun washing over you in a great warm yellow flood. Ah, you'd know life then! You'd fill up your lungs and throw back your shoulders and live. It would make your blood gallop, that wind and sun. It would make you want to shout for very joy in being alive."

"How enthusiastic you are!" She smiled in faint mockery. "But I agree with La Rochefoucauld, that 'before desiring a thing ardently we should inquire what happiness it affords to those who possess it.' I don't believe that life has sufficient compensations for the lottery of daring to live intensely."

"Live intensely! What do you know about that?" said the man. He stooped suddenly, shutting his hands over hers where they lay in her lap. "Ah, what are you doing—what are you doing?" he said. "Why are you holding yourself back with all your strength from life—and from me?"

Dumbed suddenly and dazed, she tried to move, and his grip tightened.

"Sit still," he said. "I am going to end this, Evelyn. Sweet, I am going to end it now. He's killing you, that fellow. He's killing you. Do you think I don't notice the difference in you, month by month? And do you think that I will bear it any longer? By Heaven, Evelyn, you know little enough of men! We can't see the thing we love trampled out of existence and stand by—stand by because conventionality orders it. Love can't do that."

"Oh!" She was trembling and thrilling as though in the grip of something new and yet dimly, dearly familiar. "Oh, take your hands away!"

He drew back, loosing her. But his eyes were challenging her boldly.

"You daren't forbid me," he said. "There is nothing—no one else—holding you, and I love you, body and soul." Then, when she rose up slowly, as though instinct bade her meet this that was coming, he made a step near and his words caught her, whirling through set speech into the broken utterances of the spirit, rising to passion, and dying at last to stern accusation.

"This is not what life is meant for," he said. "Not atrophy of heart and brain. You are sinning against yourself. You are starving, and you know it."

She was standing quite still now, with her hands clasped together as they hung. The firelight played about the deep yellow of her gown, turning it to flame. But her dark head and delicate shoulders, like her life, were still in shadow.

"Yes," she said, as though thinking the words, "I am starving."

"And you had to be told it before you knew it——"

"No," she said, still as if she thought aloud. "Oh, no. That is the one thing I have known clearly all the time."

"Then you have no need to starve any more," he said, and a great tenderness shook him. "You need love. You need someone to shelter you—to think for you. You are one of those who must have a strong man in their lives, dear; for you are too fully a woman to live alone. You have been crushed down for years—cramped into a place where you cannot live. You need love to pull you out of it. You need love."

She swayed a little, as though feeling insurgent waves of an incoming sea beating on the barriers which had shut her in to stagnation.

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"I AM GOING TO END IT NOW. HE'S KILLING YOU, THAT FELLOW. HE'S KILLING YOU."

"Yes," she said. "Yes, yes. I need love."

"Then take it," he said, and put his hands on her shoulders. "Take it, and as God is above us you shall never wish you had not. You were meant for love—and kisses—and sunshine." He drew her close, stooping his head to her. "Wake up and take them," he said, intensely. "Come out with me to the wind and the sun, and live, dear. I will make you *feel* life, Evelyn—Evelyn——"

"Wait!" She put her hand up, and her eyes were strange as though some new, deep knowledge was stirring within her. "Wait! To feel life; not to be afraid to feel it——"

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"That's it. Not to be afraid to feel it. Or to live it, either. Come with me, you dear woman who lost the key to both before you knew you had it. Come with me, and we'll live it and feel it together." He felt that his voice was uneven and his muscles were loosening and twitching. The unresisting aloofness of her made her more sacred, even as it made her dearer. "To love," he said. "That's what we are put on earth for. The ancients knew that better than we know it now."

"To love," she repeated. Her eyes were shining now; expectant, as though she listened to some inner voice and did not doubt the answer.

"This was meant from the beginning," he said. "This was meant." His arms tightened about her; but still her upraised hand was a barrier between them, and he, watching the dawning exultation in her eyes, had no mind to break it down. He had called her, prayed her, drawn her out of nothingness, even as Pygmalion had drawn Galatea. And she was coming; pulsing slowly, wonderfully into life under his touch.

"To love," she said again. "And to live. To be incarnate—and not dead—not to know the chill of the grave——"

"No," he said. "Never that for you, dear one. Never any more."

He drew her closer; but before his first kiss fell on her lips knowledge reached her, and she slipped from him, quick and ambient as a flame.

"Not you," she cried, glad as a child which has just solved a puzzle. "*Not* you! Oh—I was afraid. I didn't know. But—not you. It is Roger. Roger still."

"What?" Stallard stared, flung back on himself. "What are you saying?"

"It is—love," she cried. She was trembling, glowing, half-unbelieving yet. "I—I was frozen, I think. And—when you spoke—it seemed like a bird in my heart fluttering and trying to break free. And it was love. And I didn't know if—if—but it is *not* you. It is Roger. It has been Roger always, and I didn't know it until now."

"Roger!" he said, and his face was flushed and his voice angry. "What absurdities you are talking! Five minutes ago you hated him, I'll swear."

"Five minutes ago I was dead," she said. "Now I am alive! Alive!" She looked it, and her voice was the lilt of a song. She smiled at him through soft, shining eyes, pushing her hair back with a girlish gesture. "I am alive!" she cried.

"I made you alive," said Stallard. "Do you understand? I made you alive!"

"For him," she said, simply. She moved forward with a gentle feminine murmur of silken skirts, and looked at the clock. It seemed that she had forgotten Stallard, except as something which needed to be removed. "Five-and-twenty past eleven," she said. "He will be here soon." She glanced at the man with a girlish dignity which baffled him. "Do you see the time?" she said. "Go, please. He will be coming, you know."

"I—I don't understand you," said Stallard. He came near, and his hands twitched and his face was working. "You let me hold you—say things to you. And now you tell me that no one matters to you but—your husband."

"That is true," she said, quietly. "But I did not know it. I think we are often so dull that we do not know—anything until a great shock wakes us up. We don't know what we will instinctively accept or reject until it is put into our hands. Then we know. And we understand." She faced him; her head thrown back a little, and the long, slender sweep of her body vibrant with new vitality, new grace. "Perhaps you won't understand," she said. "Perhaps a man doesn't. But it is loving, not the being loved, which keeps one alive. That is my 'ounce of civet to sweeten' life." She smiled, remembering. "It is better to love than just to be loved," she said. "That is a woman's secret. That is what we understand—we who are nearer to the core of life. The faculty of loving—*that* is what we must have, or we wither up and die."

Stallard was silent. He realized, more completely than words could ever tell him, that he was not only outside her life, but that he practically did not exist for her any longer. He had been merely the means to an end—and, that end being accomplished, the intricate resistless force by which Nature works had removed him from her life—for ever. He laughed unsteadily.

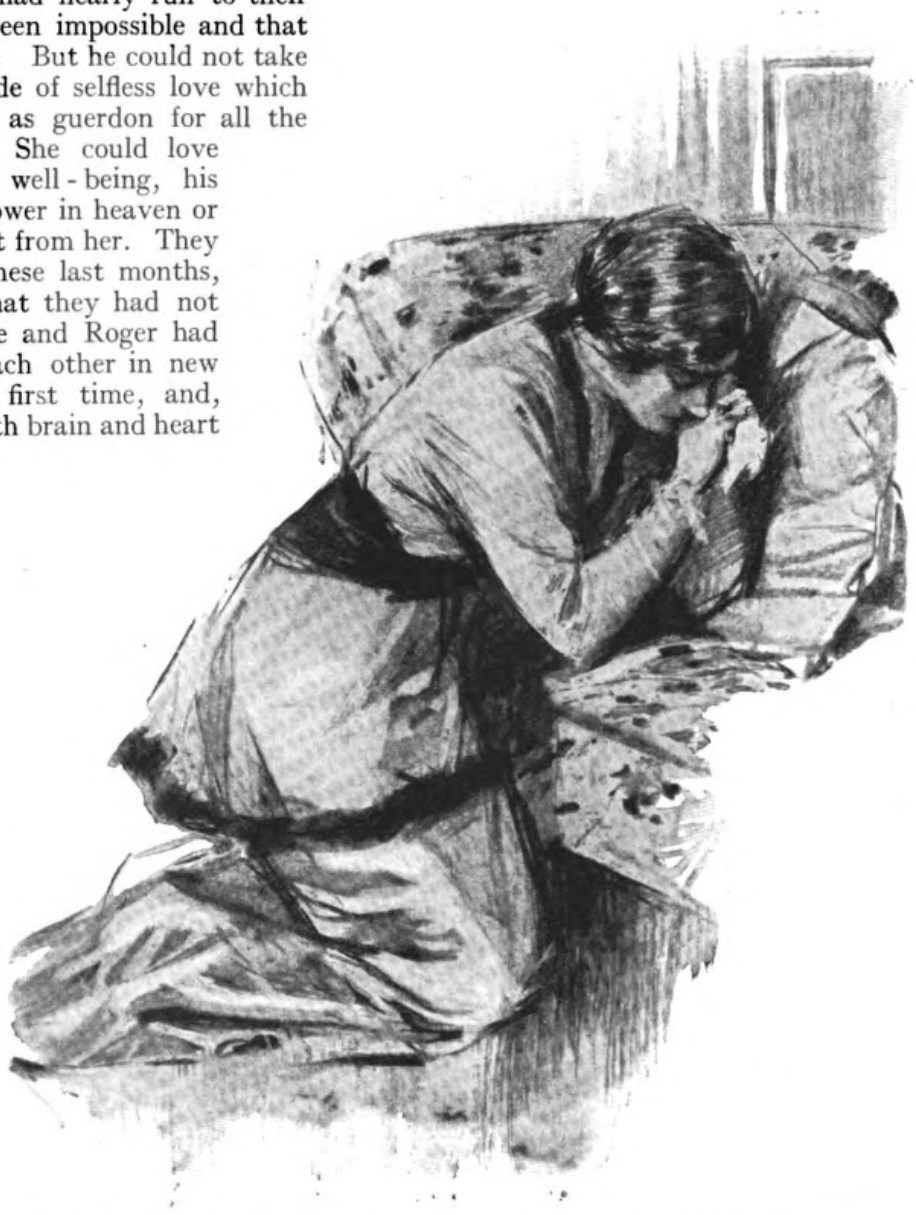
"A man once wrote a book called 'Life's Little Ironies,'" he said. "I understand that title now. Perhaps you won't, but Guinness will if you ever tell him this. You needn't look at the clock again; I am going." He touched her hand a moment. "Good-bye," he said. "I hope you won't have to find out that a one-sided love is not quite such a glorious possession as you seem to think."

She flung herself on her knees as the door

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shut, and laughed and wept herself back into sanity by the ways a woman will. The ice in her, the numb despair, had broken up, and she could think of her husband now with a strange, deep glow of understanding and forgiveness which she knew to be far removed from the selfish fleeting passion of youth. He might leave her; he might decree that these last months, which had nearly run to their appointed six, had been impossible and that their lives must part. But he could not take from her this full tide of selfless love which had been given her as guerdon for all the barren self years. She could love him, pray for his well-being, his happiness, and no power in heaven or earth could take that from her. They had been strange, these last months, but she saw now that they had not been unhappy. She and Roger had stood off, seeing each other in new perspective for the first time, and, advancing slowly, with brain and heart set to the new focus, they had taken saner, clearer measure of each other. The little pretty tricks and the daring arguments which she had kept for friends only had been Roger's of late, and the courteous interest which he always brought to bear on all social matters was hers. Gradually new bonds were cementin them. Gradually the efforts which both had been making had engendered new strength in them. She saw it now. Blindly she had been walking towards the truth, and although, being fully human, she did not thank Stallard for giving it to her, she realized that she had found it now. Only a touch had been needed, and she had had that touch.

Then she heard him coming, and her eyes shone and her low, eager laugh had tears of excitement in it. He was coming, the man she loved. She pushed his usual chair up to the fire, slipped down into her own, and lit a cigarette with trembling fingers. It was only since she had become Roger's friend that she had learned to smoke, and the daintiness in her rebelled against it still. But this was one of the things which had brought her nearer the man. She looked up, nodding brightly, as he came in.



"SHE FLUNG HERSELF ON HER KNEES, AND LAUGHED AND WEPT HERSELF BACK INTO SANITY BY THE WAYS A WOMAN WILL."

"Unpunctual person," she said. "I nearly locked you out."

"That would have been sheer spite," he said, smiling. "I told you I had something special to say—and you are a woman, you know."

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"Well, sit down and say it. And here are cigarettes. And poke the fire, please. I'm too comfy to move."

She laughed, brimming with her happy secret. Yes, this new, strange joy had stood the test of his presence. As he sat down, speaking of casual things, she looked under her curved hand at that familiar, quiet face which had once been so dear to her, and which her throbbing pulses told her was dear to her again.

"Kenyon asked me down to Devonshire for the week-end, Evelyn," he said, presently. "If I go that oversteps the six months that we—we contracted for. I wondered if you would mind our speaking of that matter to-night instead."

She moved, as though something had suddenly stabbed her with fear and with a wild desire. Little flames quivered before her eyes, and the man's breathing, as he sat staring into the fire, sounded loud in her ears.

"I am quite willing," she said, slowly.

"Thank you," said Guinness. But he continued to watch the fire, unspeaking, and if she had dared to look at him she would have seen that there was moisture round his lips and at the edge of his dark hair. But she did not look. She was realizing for the first time that it was possible that he might wish them to part.

"I want to thank you most truly and honestly for these six months," he said, at last. "You have met a difficult situation like the sweet, unselfish soul you are, and you have helped me to meet one which was more difficult than you knew." He hesitated. "When—when the breach began to widen between us you shrank back into yourself, Evelyn, and you tried to stop yourself from feeling anything. Wasn't that so?"

"Yes," she said, and could smile at that tragedy now.

"For women such as you a cloister is possibly a natural solution. It is seldom so for a man. It—could not be for such a man as I am."

She moved a little, to shield her face from the fire, that was still turning her yellow gown to flickering flames.

"No," she said, with quiet acquiescence. "No."

Guinness was leaning forward with his hands gripped between his knees. He spoke evenly, as one who has all his muscles under strong control.

"About two years ago, when relations were particularly strained between us, as you probably remember, I met, down at Kenyon's place, a cousin of his. You were there too, of course; but you may have forgotten her. It was Mrs. Owen."

"I have forgotten her," she said, as he waited for her to speak.

"She was a very brilliant woman; very much alive; very sympathetic. We discovered that we cared a great deal for the same things, and when I came back to town we corresponded. She wrote delightful letters; full of verve and unexpected turns of thought—like herself. They stimulated me considerably in the—the unhappy time you and I were passing through. I learned to value those letters extremely, and I—I answered them at unusual length."

He paused again. But she did not speak. His voice quickened.

"You don't ask me if I complained about you. Thank you. There was nothing of that kind. I did not realize that it was possible that a time might come—when—well, on the day when I spoke to you of the necessity for change I had had a letter from her. It was not like the others, and it decided me to speak to you. If you had reproached me; if you had been one atom less willing to try honestly and generously to find a way out of our trouble, I think I would have answered that letter, Evelyn. As it was—I burnt it."

Still the woman in the chair sat motionless, and he could not see her face.

"I burnt it," he said. "And I have neither seen her nor written to her since." He turned, laying his hand on his wife's. "Your friendship has become a very real thing to me now," he said. "So real and so dear that I can't accept it any longer without telling you the whole truth. I see your beauty of soul and your goodness as I never saw them before, and I reverence them. But I cannot say yet that you are more to me than she is, Evelyn. I can only say that, if you are generous enough to continue in this way, I hope—in time—I wish——"

He was stammering like a boy, and the hand which lay on hers was trembling. And it was his voice and his touch which roused in her the full glory of woman's heritage. That love which lies at the bottom of the heart of every woman sprang up in her; the mother-love which, when fused with the wife-love, makes the perfect whole. She leaned forward, looking into her husband's face with starry eyes. And then she lifted his hand to her lips, and kissed it.

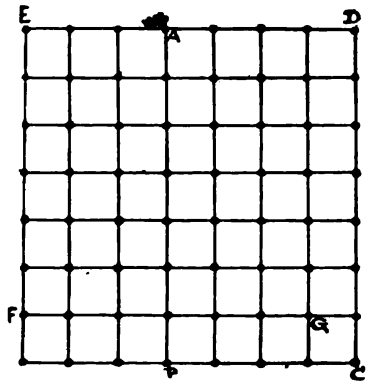
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# PERPLEXITIES.

## By HENRY E. DUDENEY.

### 210.—A MOTOR-CAR PUZZLE.

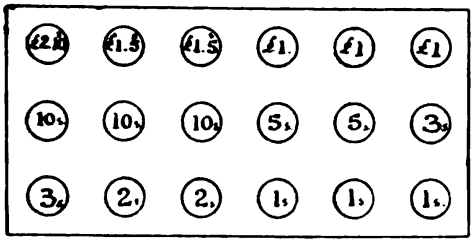
A TRAVELLER starts in his car from the point A and wishes to go as far as possible while making only fifteen turnings, and never going along the same road twice. The dots represent towns and are one mile apart. Supposing, for example, that he went straight to B, then straight to C, then to D, E, F, and G, then you will find that he has gone thirty-seven miles in five turnings. How far can he go in fifteen turnings?




### 211.—THE SMUGGLERS' WINE.

AMONG the contraband goods landed by some smugglers were several boxes of wine. On examination they found they had brought ashore seven quart bottles and seven pint bottles of wine and five empty quart and five empty pint bottles. But they made an equitable division so that each received the same quantity of wine and the same number of bottles of each size. No wine is to be poured from one bottle to another. How many smugglers were there in the band and how was the division made?

### 212.—THE EIGHTEEN COUNTERS.




THESE counters are checks or tallies, representing the value marked on them. The puzzle again lies in an equitable division. You have merely to divide the counters among three persons, giving six to each, so that every man holds the same total value. It calls for just a little ingenuity.

### 213.—CATCHING THE THIEF.

"Now, constable," said the defendant's counsel, "you say that the prisoner was exactly twenty-seven steps ahead of you when you started to run after him?"

"Yes, sir."

"And you swear that he takes eight steps to your five?"

"That is so."

"Then, I ask you, constable, as an intelligent man, to explain how you ever caught him, if that is the case."

"Well, you see, I've got a longer stride. In fact, two of my steps are equal in length to five of the prisoner's. You will find that the number of steps I required would bring me exactly to the spot where I captured him."

The foreman of the jury asked for a few minutes to figure it out. Can you say how many steps the officer needed to catch the thief?

### 214.—MISSING WORDS.

I SAW her dance like . . . . . upon the green;
Her gown was white, with . . . . . of yellow dyed;
Her cheeks were like the . . . . . apple seen.
And now before the . . . . . she stands, a bride.
The four missing words contain the same letters.

## Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles.

### 205.—CARD MAGIC SQUARES.

ARRANGE the cards as follows for the three new squares:—

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 3 | 2 | 4 |
| 4 | 3 | 2 |
| 2 | 4 | 3 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 6 | 5 | 7 |
| 7 | 6 | 5 |
| 5 | 7 | 6 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 9 | 8 | 10 |
| 10 | 9 | 8 |
| 8 | 10 | 9 |

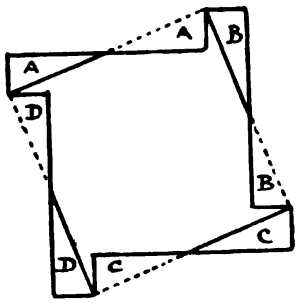
Three aces and one ten are not used. The summations of the four squares are thus: 9, 15, 18, and 27—all different, as required.

### 206.—THE NEW GUN.

THE gun should have fired the fifteen shots in fourteen minutes. Mark fifteen dots on a line, one inch apart, and you will at once see that the distance from the first dot to the last is fourteen inches—not fifteen. The answer is therefore not "Because the Swiss have no navy," for the Government really wanted the gun for other purposes.

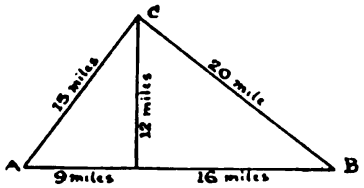
### 207.—A NEW CUTTING-OUT PUZZLE.

MAKE the cutsas shown in the illustration and fit the four triangular pieces into the places enclosed by the dotted lines




### 208.—THE THREE VILLAGES.

CALLING the three villages by their initial letters, it is clear that the three roads form a triangle, A, B, C, with a perpendicular measuring twelve miles. This divides our triangle into two right-angled triangles, with a twelve-mile side in common. It is then found that the distance from A to C is 15 miles, from C to B 20 miles, and from A to B 25 (that is, 9 and 16) miles. These figures are easily proved, for the square of 12 added to the square of 9 equals the square of 15, and the square of 12 added to the square of 16 equals the square of 20.




### 209.—A BURIED PROVERB.

THE required proverb is, "A rolling stone gathers no moss."

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# Myxomycetes.

## By ARTHUR MORRISON.

### Illustrated by René Bull.

AT my first encounter with Mr. Montgomery Staggers, he offered me, out of pure personal regard and affection, five thousand shares in the Stumer Gold, Diamond, Silver, and Gas Mine, Limited, at fourpence a share; an offer, by his own confession, equivalent to making my fortune in a fortnight. Somehow I refrained from buying those shares, and on later occasions I neglected other similar opportunities. After this the financier's zeal for my temporal welfare somewhat abated, and with no more than one or two further attempts to endow me beyond the dreams of avarice, he descended to an occasionally expressed desire for the loan of half a crown. It was thus that I first heard of myxomycetes.

I was base enough, at first, to suspect Mr. Staggers of inventing this word, but you will find it in any dictionary or any encyclopædia, and you may find myxomycetes itself on an old tree-stump—any number of species of it, and men of science call it protozoa — the lowest form of animal life.

Unless you are a hardened teetotaller you are probably aware of those wine-shops in London where a basket of free biscuits stands near a crumbled heap of eleemosynary cheese. It was at one of these institutions that Mr. Montgomery Staggers absorbed his daily sustenance and transacted such business as he could compass. The fluid share of the honour was mine, Mr. Montgomery Staggers being snugly entrenched between the biscuits and the cheese, while he proceeded to deliver himself of the following:—

People have been most shockingly fed up with mines, but they're as good a promotion as anything even now, if you can only get 'em to bite. Scientific invention's all my eye; the scientific chaps don't seem to know the game, and they're bound to let you in for something, sooner or later. No more science for me, not after old Burridge and his blooming myxomycetes.

I was in with a useful little crowd at that time that were very enterprising, and game for anything. What money was wanted we usually got from a chap called Stibbins—for office furniture and such, not much—but he certainly had ideas sometimes, and synthetic goods was one of his specials. *Commercial Syntheses, Unlimited*—you could do so much with it, you see; anyhow, it seemed so; synthetic bricks, synthetic timber, synthetic leather, glass, wool, gold—anything; make 'em all chemically. We made up our minds to do it properly; get a tame science merchant and put him in a proper laboratory, just to show the mugs, with all his synthetic bricks and timber round him, and a precious large lot o' retorts and tubes and jars and glass bubble-shaped things and blow-pipes. So Stibbins got hold of Burridge. He'd been a teacher in science schools, but he was always hoofed out because he would muddle with his own experiments instead o' teachin'. So we got him a new suit o' clothes and all the retorts and stinks and stuff he wanted, and shoved 'em all in the back room o' the office Stibbins took in a court off Broad Street. "And now," says we, "go ahead and make bricks out o' straw or anything you like in them glass things."

"Bricks?" says the old chap, "I want to make protoplasm. I believe I can generate life! It's the dream of my career."

"Life be blowed," says we; "we want something with money in it, like bricks. It'll do if you only make-believe to make 'em, in a scientific way."

They were buildin' a new bank up the street, and I went out and borrowed a few bricks in the dusk. We brushed 'em up neat and set 'em out on a bit o' green baize in the office with a label: "SYNTHETIC BRICKS—THE FINISHED ARTICLE!" And next morning old Bashford Keeble—he was one of us then—brought in a bit of synthetic timber he'd sawed off a new fence, and we put that on another bit o' green baize with a label of its own. We bought a bit of synthetic leather at a grinder's shop for a bob, and we all put in specimens of synthetic glass—such a lot of empty whisky-bottles that Stibbins said there was nothing so suspicious as overdoin' it, and pitched most of 'em out. You never saw anybody more surprised than

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old Burridge when he saw the specimens all nicely laid out with their labels, in the front office. "But I haven't made 'em yet," says he.

"What rot!" says we. "Of course you made 'em—here they are! We can't wait for your experiments—this is business."

I ought to have told you that besides Stibbins and me there was old Bashford Keeble and a couple of others, Pewtris and Crump. I did the gentlemanly man o' the world, and Bashford Keeble was the respectable virtuous. He had a very high, shiny forehead—mostly baldness—beautiful wavy, grey hair—and a beard like Moses. You'd have trusted him with your last bob—lots o' people did it at different times, and sure enough it *was* their last. What?

Stibbins pulled the strings generally, and Pewtris and Crump were what you might call general utility.

First we were after a private syndicate—just a few select mugs at as much as they were good for apiece; got at through the partnership and investment advertisements.

Well, we began on the syndicate, but somehow the syndicate wouldn't begin on us. We got out ads. solid-lookin' enough for the Bank of England, but at first we didn't get a bite. Nibbles, yes; miserable nibbles. Old fogies would come in and listen to it all, and take a peep at Burridge and his stinks, and say the bricks were wonderful, and the bit o' wood was marvellous, and the leather amazing, and the bottles that life-like they almost smelt of whisky; and then they'd say they'd think over it, and they'd go fading out on to the stairs and never be heard of again.

Stibbins was getting short and rusty about the whole thing, and kept throwing up to us the money we were all costing him for the new clothes he'd rigged us out with, and all that. And then I had a good idea. So I knocked up a little ad. like this:—

A unique opportunity of lucrative investment in the greatest scientific discovery of the age, with an important directorship, is open to a woman who is able to exercise independent judgment untrammelled by the "advice" or other patronage of the duller sex.—Address, COMMERCIAL, 5, Duffield Court, Broad Street.

That went into a suffragette paper, and it rather fetched 'em—quite a number. The trouble was we had so many call that were all ready for the directorship but wanted to leave out the investment. And then all of a sudden we had a double event in one day. Old Burridge invented his myxomycetes and Miss Agatha Gunter answered the ad.

We got the invention first. Stibbins and I were sittin' in the office, when suddenly there came a frightful yell from the stink-shop. We thought old Burridge had caught fire at last or something, and rushed at the door in a bunch. But there was the old frump dancing and waving his arms like mad, and staring at a little gruelly splash on a bit o' glass lyin' on his bench.

"Got it!" shouts the old boy. "Organic life! Synthetic myxomycetes! Done it! Me! Alone! Hooray!"

And before we could make up our minds whether to knock him down or tie him up, he burst into a gabble of explanations.

"Oh, stow the pigeon-English," says Stibbins; "what is it in plain Whitechapel?"

"Myxomycetes," says Burridge; "protozoa, the lowest form of animal life—made it synthetically! It's quite a new species, too—stronger in growth and assimilation than any of 'em, and grows with the damp of the atmosphere alone. Look here—that splash on the glass is dormant, and ready to throw out spores; but look at this!"

He scraped up a bit with a knife, and put it on a piece o' firewood; and sure enough it settled down in a sort of blob and then began spreading out little points very slowly all round.

We watched the points creep out over the wood, hardly moving; and then Burridge dipped a little glass rod in water and let fall a drop or two in the wood just by the side of the jelly. The moment it reached the damp it rushed ahead like one o'clock; ran all along the bit of wood and spread round it, till it was covered.

"It's eating that wood up," says Burridge, and he dropped it into a jar. Sure enough, presently it all sort of melted down in the bottom of the jar and there was no wood there—one o' the rummest things I ever saw. Creepy, too, to think that messy stuff was really alive and calmly lunchin' off our firewood in that gluttonous way.

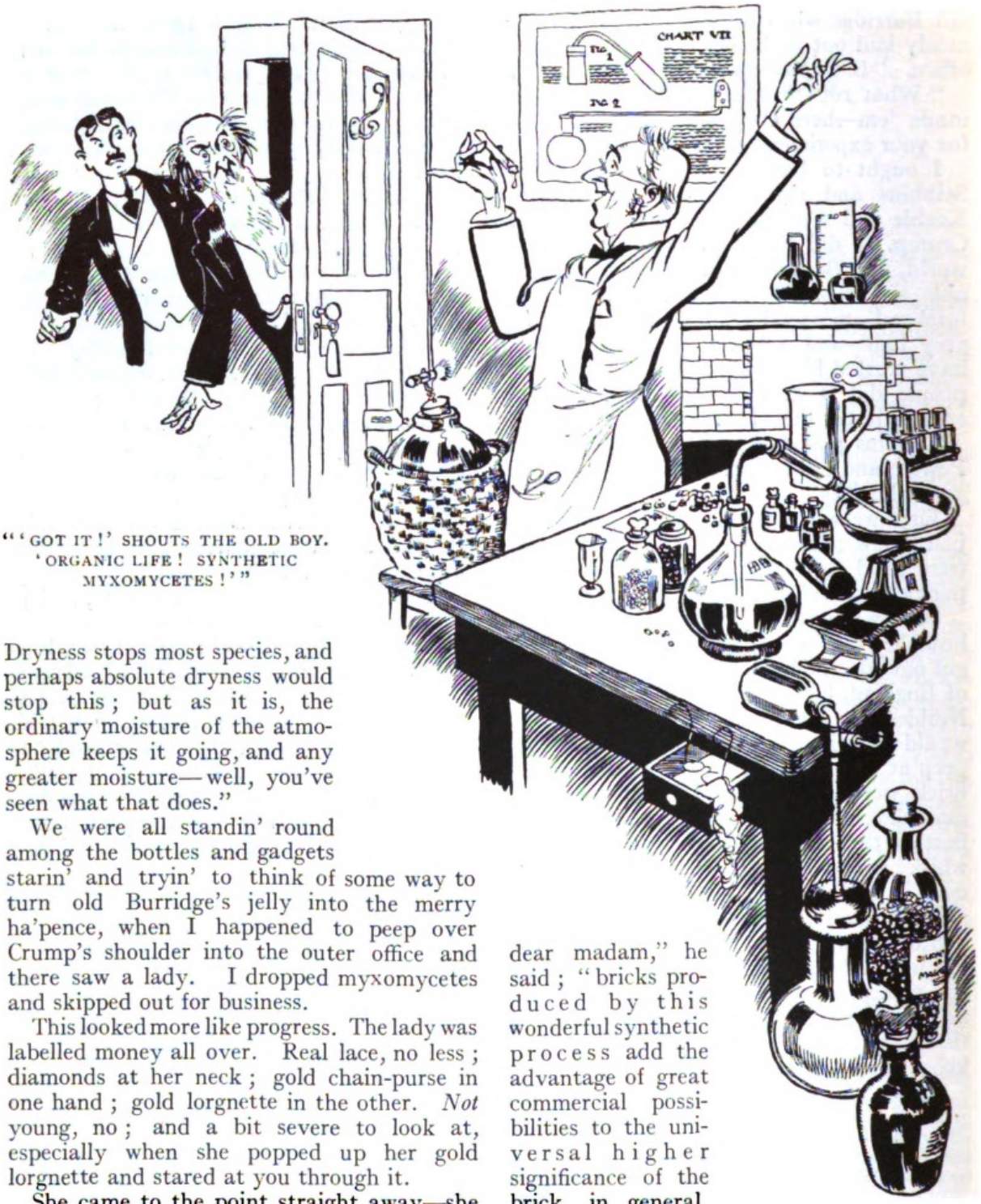
"It's a most amazingly vigorous species," says Burridge, grinning with triumph all over. "Nothing like it in the natural protozoa. Anything that's really wet it gobbles up like lightning. Look at this."

He tore off a bit from a duster, and dipped it in water. Then he picked up another bit of the jelly on the knife and wiped it on the wet rag. It just rushed all over that rag, and in two seconds it was another lump of jelly, which he dropped into the jar on top of the first.

"You see," says Burridge, "in the glass jar it goes dormant. So it would on metal; it only grows on what it can eat, and it only eats organic matter or its derivatives. Warmth makes it grow and eat quicker, so does darkness.



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"'GOT IT!' SHOUTS THE OLD BOY. 'ORGANIC LIFE! SYNTHETIC MYXOMYCETES!'"

Dryness stops most species, and perhaps absolute dryness would stop this; but as it is, the ordinary moisture of the atmosphere keeps it going, and any greater moisture—well, you've seen what that does."

We were all standin' round among the bottles and gadgets starin' and tryin' to think of some way to turn old Burridge's jelly into the merry ha'pence, when I happened to peep over Crump's shoulder into the outer office and there saw a lady. I dropped myxomycetes and skipped out for business.

This looked more like progress. The lady was labelled money all over. Real lace, no less; diamonds at her neck; gold chain-purse in one hand; gold lorgnette in the other. *Not* young, no; and a bit severe to look at, especially when she popped up her gold lorgnette and stared at you through it.

She came to the point straight away—she was ready to invest in anything she was satisfied with. What was this? And before I could begin to explain, there was that oily old flatterer, Bashford Keeble, wagging his venerable locks on the other side of her, and taking the words out of my mouth. Stibbins lay low. He was no society ornament, and he had the sense to know it.

We pointed out the bricks, and old Bashford Keeble began to discourse at large on bricks as a moral institution. "Bricks, my dear madam," he said; "bricks produced by this wonderful synthetic process add the advantage of great commercial possibilities to the universal higher significance of the brick in general. The thoughtless throng is apt to ignore the moral import of the brick. The brick in its multitudes gives shelter to the human race, supports the domestic hearth, has its part in the sanctity of the home. It is an inspiring thought——"

"Yes, yes," says the lady; "and do these bricks support the domestic hearth any better than the usual kind?"

"Much," says Keeble; "it's one of their chief recommendations."

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"Also," I put in, "the whole scheme is more particularly calculated to support in opulence the domestic hearths of those investors who come in privately *now*—on the ground floor, as we say in the City."

"Indeed?" she says; "and how do you make the bricks?"

"By the process invented by our Mr. Burridge, whose name will resound throughout the ages when Newton's is forgotten. You see, we take hydrated silica of ammonia and magnesia, and then, combining these ingredients with calcium, and adding the proper quantity of potash and free silica, we pass the whole through an intricate process of—er—synthesis, and what with the synthesis of the combination actin' on the combination of the synthesis, and the consequent reaction on both—why, there you are, don't you know!"

"Dear me!" says she, looking hard at me through her lorgnette all the while. "So much simpler than baking clay! Show me something else!"

Somehow I began to feel that the stroke hadn't quite come off, but I dashed in on the wood tack.

"Now, this timber," I said, pickin' up the specimen; "we're anticipatin' an enormous revenue from chemically produced timber. Quite indistinguishable from the natural article, and free from all knots and defects. Made in any length to order, at a price beyond the reach of competition with e-normous profits. To a lady of your educated intelligence, I need scarcely point out the enormous, the universal demand for timber."

"Timber," says old Keeble, shovin' in his oar from the other side, "hitherto only to be procured by the barbarous destruction of the fairest scenes of sylvan delight, will now be supplied to the crying needs of our fellow-creatures by an inexpensive but moral chemical process, placing it within the reach of the humblest."

"And what's the inexpensive moral process?" asks Miss Gunter. She had a way of starin' immovably at you through those frozen glasses all the while you were speakin', with about as much expression on her face as the back of a tombstone, and then rappin' out a question like an assegai.

Old Bashford Keeble never could be sure of the scientific patter. He flourished his hands in a sort of general way and said it was done with lignum and cellulose, and synthetic combination, and other secret ingredients.

"Oh!" says the lady, as though she hadn't expected that. "Have you tried melting down sawdust?"

Poor old Keeble waggled his hands feebly and said it seemed a good idea, and he'd mention it to the board.

"Do," says Miss Gunter; "it's just the sort of thing that might interest a board."

Old Keeble and I looked across at each other pretty blank, but to hear her voice and look at her tombstone face it was hard to believe she was guyin' us, even now. She reached over and took up the piece of leather.

"And this is the synthetic leather, is it?" she said, turning it over. "Extraordinarily like the real thing, quite extraordinarily. If you were not so *honest* you might safely call it *genuine*. But it's rather rudimentary. Why not synthetic boots? You're more advanced with the glass, I see. *Such* a convenient shape, isn't it? I suppose you'll soon produce bottles ready labelled?"

"And with whisky in 'em," I said, with something as near a wink as I dared. For it was plain now we weren't scorin', and old Keeble was shakin' his head and waggin' his hands and tryin' to look as though he wasn't responsible for anything.

"Yes, yes; very profitable to somebody, no doubt," says Miss Gunter. "Where's your works?"

"No works, as yet," I said; "but we've a small laboratory here where Mr. Burridge works."

It struck me suddenly that we might do something after all, if we could impress her with the myxomycetes. So I said, very confidentially, "I don't know if I ought to mention it yet, but as a matter of fact he really *has* made the most astounding discovery only just now. He has produced life by chemical means!"

"Indeed? How wonderful!" says she, calm and stony as ever. "Show me. Let us come and see life—by chemical means."

We went into the back room, and she almost seemed to take to old Burridge, comparatively speaking. He was bubblin' all over still, and he explained all about myxomycetes and the formic aldehydes and amino acids, and he did the experiments again with a larger piece of wood and a wet duster. Miss Gunter was so taken with it she forgot to say anything sarcastic, and old Keeble, findin' her comin' round a bit on this, butted in again, and poked his fingers and his whiskers into things and muddled up the explanations, and did all he could to shove himself in front of poor old Burridge, who was providin' the show.

I must say it *was* a fascinatin' show, with its horrid, slobbery creepiness. To know that beastly jelly was *alive*, and to see it go

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"HE EXPLAINED ALL ABOUT MYXOMYCETES AND THE FORMIC ALDEHYDES AND AMINO ACIDS."

reachin' out over things and wrap 'em round and eat 'em up, and to see it rush ahead like lightning the moment it met any sort of moisture, as though a drink stimulated its appetite—well, creepy fascination was all you could call it; I found myself sort o' dislikin' the stuff more and more, as you might lookin' at a worse than usual kind of reptile, and yet bein' fascinated to see it. Miss Gunter, stony as she was, kind of stood off and pulled in her skirts, but couldn't take her eyes off the stuff till the experiment was done, and the swelled jelly dropped into a jar.

Then she said, "Thank you, Mr. Burridge; it is most interesting. This is *one* thing I can congratulate you on at any rate, and I really think I should like to come again!" Quite gracious to old Burridge.

"Certainly—delighted, I'm sure," says old Keeble, buttin' in as usual and rubbin' his hands. "I shall always be most pleased——"

"Yes, yes," says Miss Gunter, turnin' on him stony again; "and what do *you* propose to produce from this discovery of chemical life? Synthetic menageries?"

She'd got him fixed with her glasses, and old Keeble could only smile uneasily and shrug his shoulders and waggle his hands as though he'd lost a towel.

Miss Gunter took a general look round and said, "Quite the most interesting afternoon! I really think I *must* come again. I've to see my broker to-morrow morning at eleven, and if there's time, I might come then. It's all so very original! *Good* afternoon!"

With that she was gone, and in the next second old Keeble had bolted after her. I saw his game in a flash—treacherous old blighter. He was throwin' us over—betrayin' his pals. Here was a woman rollin' in money, and—*single;* that was enough for him. He'd been sort of washin' his hands of us in dumb-show ever since it was plain she wasn't swallowin' what we served her; and now he was off after her by himself. I saw at once it was a thing that must be seen to; and if the lady preferred a weddin' to shares in a syndicate, what was the matter with *me?* I grabbed my hat and hooked it after Keeble.

It's a short court, and by the time I was out of the front door the lady was gettin' into a spankin' landaulette car waitin' at the end of the court in Broad Street, and Keeble, with his beard all flyin' and his shoulders bobbin', was holdin' the door and seein' her in.

There's a tea-and-bun shop at the corner of the court, with an entrance in each street. So I just slipped in there till I saw Keeble retire and the car begin to move off, and then I dashed out of the front door and skipped on to the step.

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" Pardon me, ma'am," I said ; " one word, in justice to myself ! "

She stopped the car. " Well," she said, "and what do *you* want ? I can't wait here long."

" My dear madam," says I, " I am ashamed, positively ashamed, to have appeared wanting in respect for the intelligence of a lady of your incisive intellect. I wish to be allowed to warn you against the nefarious designs of the Commercial Syntheses Syndicate. As to my own seeming part in their scheme, if you will allow me a few minutes' explanation——"

" Oh," says she. " Another penitent, is it ? I can't wait now. I've just sent the other away. He's to be here at the entrance of the court to-morrow morning at half-past ten to catch me before I go in, and explain everything. You'd better come too. *Good* afternoon ! "

I skipped off the step with the best bow I could muster, and the car sailed off. It was a bit awkward. To begin with, I wasn't altogether sorry to be cut off just then, because, as a matter of fact, I hadn't any particular explanation ready, and it might have been a bit awkward to invent as I went along. On the other hand, old Keeble and I were to weigh in our explanations in a blessed chorus. As I turned it over, the humour of the thing came uppermost, and it gradually presented itself in the light of a prodigious lark. Old Keeble would know nothing about the arranged chorus, and when I turned up, all ready for the fun, he would be rather off his game. I spent half the night thinking out my part.

But it wasn't needed—not a line. I got to the office pretty early in the morning, but only just before old Keeble ; and when he came in, he came like a firework, and he was bald as a coot, head and chin and all ! All his wavy locks and every hair of his beard was gone, and anything less like Moses you couldn't invent. You'd only have known him by his clothes.

" Look at this ! " he blared. " I'm ruined ! I can't show myself for half a year ! This is what comes of that old fool's experiments ! I must ha' got some of the spores or something out of that stuff of his into my beard yesterday. I thought I felt something gummy in it, and as soon as I began to wash, it was all a mess of that infernal jelly, and the more I washed the worse it went, till it was all over my head and I could feel it gnawing into my skin ! I thought I was goin' stark ravin' mad ! I rolled over in the bed-clothes and wiped it off on the sheets, and I got up like this ! Not a hair on my head—not a hair ! I rubbed it all over with vaseline and stopped the gnawing, or I believe it would have eaten my head off ! And while I was doin' that it ate the bed-clothes, and I left it comin' downstairs, gobblin' up the stair carpet ! "

He fell back into a chair for a moment, blown ; and then he jumped up and went for the back room. " I'll exterminate the stuff, and Burridge too ! " he yelled.

Poor old Burridge was busy with his jim-jams, and wasn't prepared to receive cavalry, so to speak. Old Keeble burst in on him like a bomb-shell, and before I could interfere, he'd swept off a whole tableful of retorts and things, and whacked the jar of myxomycetes into the fireplace. It smashed into fifty thousand bits, and Burridge set up a howl like a tortured soul.

" The spores'll be everywhere," he yelled, scrapin' at the stuff with the fire-shovel.

" Yes—have some of 'em ! " bawls Keeble, firin' another jar at his head.

It hit the wall and scattered everywhere, and then I grabbed Keeble, and Stibbins and Crump came in and pacified him with office-rulers. Stibbins had paid hard money for the stuff in the office, and he was sensitive about it.

Presently I left them trying to clean up, and slipped out to keep my appointment with Miss Gunter. I hadn't to wait long at the end of the court before I saw the spankin' landaulette sailin' up.

" Well," says Miss Gunter, " and where's the other penitent ? "

I explained the accident. " It's a most unfortunate occurrence," I said, " and I expect it'll be a long time before he's visible. Some might call it a judgment ! "

" So they might," says she. " And where's *your* judgment ? "

" That," I said, " I am content to leave in your hands. At any rate, this unfortunate accident gives me the opportunity of expressing, unheard but by you, my gratitude for the angelic influence—yours, Miss Gunter—which has made another and a better man of me. Partly in my innocence, led away by evil persons—*older* men I may say, much older—and partly, let me confess it with a new heart, tempted by the prospect of gain held out to me, I was about to engage—had begun to engage, in fact—in an enterprise of questionable probity ; when suddenly, by the magic of your presence, your manner, your words, your better, nobler influence, for which, if I may offer the devotion of a lifetime——"

" Why, bless me," says Miss Gunter, " I do believe you're making love to me ; nobody

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ever did that before. I thought your venerable friend was beginning yesterday, and I was *so* sorry I hadn't time to let him go on. But don't *you* stop, on any account. Come inside the car—it's beginning to rain ! "

So it was. It was ploppin' heavily on my new hat and all over the best suit of clothes I ever had. So I nipped inside, and went on.

" Your woman's heart," I said, " your divine instinct has told you the truth. Agatha ! If I may call you so—I saw the charming name on your card—Agatha——"

" Why, what's the matter with your hat ? "

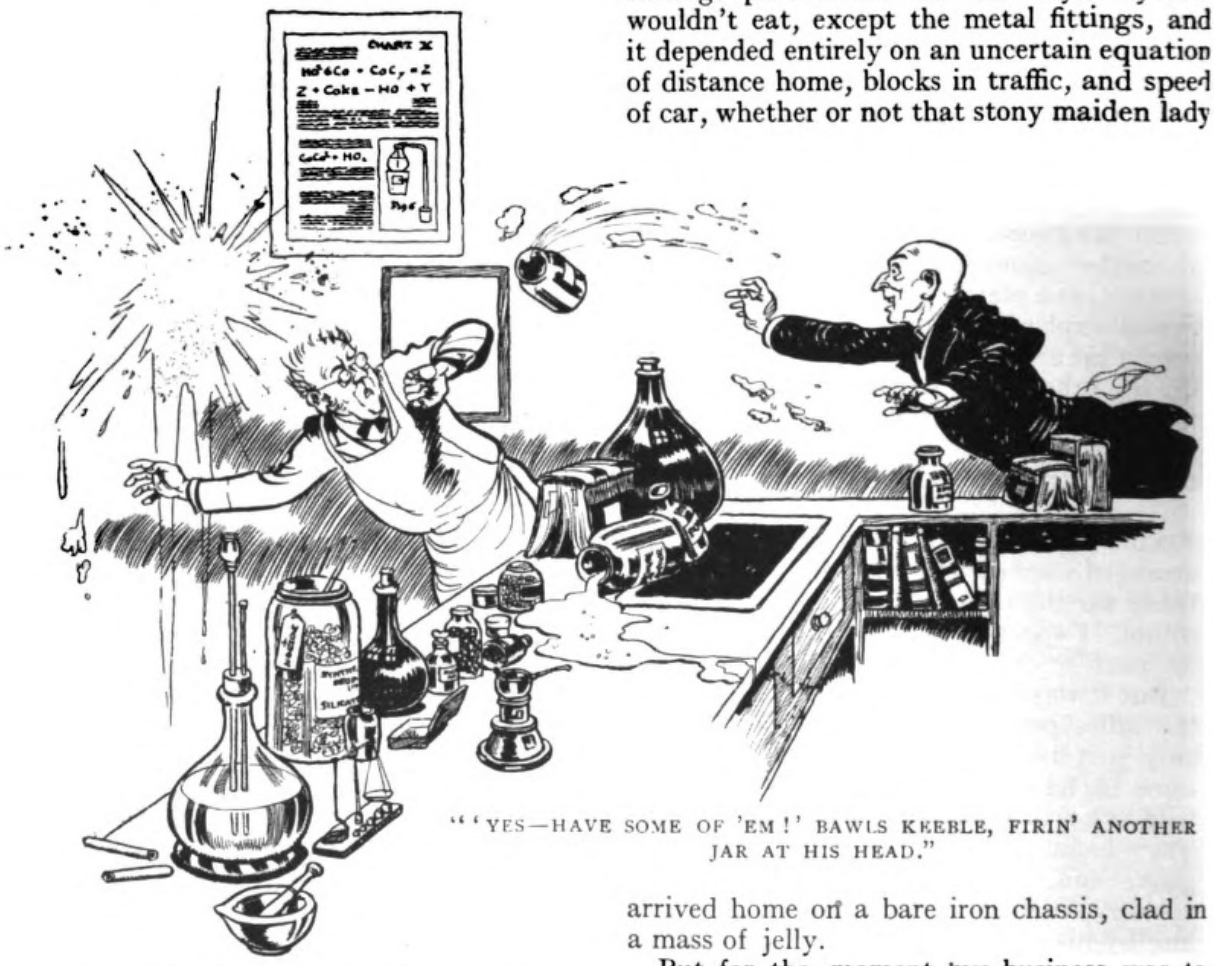
she said, suddenly, staring at it through her glasses.

I whipped it off, and there, in great blobs, was that unholy jelly—myxomycetes ! The stuff and its spores had flown everywhere in the scrimmage, and now the rain had finished the job, and the blobs were running together in masses ! And even while I stared, fascinated and horrified, a great dollop fell flop on Miss Gunter's dress and began to spread ! More, I was coming out in great spots of jelly all over my clothes, my boots—everywhere !

A full comprehension of the state of affairs struck Miss Gunter in a flash. She sprang up with a yelp I shouldn't have expected of her and shoved me out into the street.

The unspeakable jelly was climbing all over me, but I gasped " Agatha ! Agatha ! " and I heard her scream to the chauffeur, " Home ! Home ! As fast as you can go ! Never mind the speed limit ! "

It was the end of love's young dream. What happened to that dear lady in that expensive car I never knew, though I often try to imagine. There was nothing in the carriage part of the car that myxomycetes wouldn't eat, except the metal fittings, and it depended entirely on an uncertain equation of distance home, blocks in traffic, and speed of car, whether or not that stony maiden lady arrived home on a bare iron chassis, clad in a mass of jelly.




" ' YES—HAVE SOME OF 'EM ! ' BAWLS KEEBLE, FIRIN' ANOTHER JAR AT HIS HEAD."

But for the moment my business was to get into the office, and I ran, with my clothes and boots melting off me as I went. I rushed up the stairs and into the office. And there the sight was appalling. Myxomycetes was crawling everywhere and eating everything, and nothing stopped it but the stone passage at the outer door. Carpet, chairs, tables, wainscot—everything. It was the most unholy scrape I ever was in. I got home somehow, in five bob's worth of rags from Houndsditch ; and we left that office with nobody but myxomycetes to settle with the landlord.

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# The Latest Methods of Tracking Criminals.

## THE "GROSS" SYSTEM.

### By WALDEMAR KAEMPFFERT.

A system of Detective Science, compared with which ordinary police methods seem crude, has been worked out by Dr. Hans Gross, of the Austrian University of Graz. A trained criminal lawyer, an expert chemist, a scholar with an erudition so vast that it embraces nearly every field of human knowledge, he has invented the most infallible system known for tracking down criminals. The writer, who was commissioned to go to Graz and make a personal investigation of the Gross system, gives here a complete account of it. Readers of this Magazine will perhaps not be surprised to find themselves reminded at every step of the methods of Sherlock Holmes.

THE police records of every metropolis teem with thrilling tales of criminals who are captured by detectives gifted with apparently supernormal penetration. But the more you analyse these miraculous performances, the less wonderful they seem. In the end, you marvel more at the crass stupidity of the policeman who fails to interpret a glaringly obvious clue than you do at the keenness of the detective who sniffs an envelope and promptly says that the murder was committed by a blond-haired, blue-eyed man with a scar on his left cheek.

#### The New Science of Crime.

Every science is but an organization of facts. A burglary is a fact; the tools with which it was committed are facts; the manner in which a house has been entered is a fact; the position of the ransacked desk and bureaux, the overturned chairs, the disarranged mattresses are all facts. Why not systematize the study of these facts and thus create a real science of crime detection?

The four universities of Graz, Lüttich, Bucharest, and Lausanne have answered the question by establishing chairs for "criminalistics"—a new discipline which has elevated the more sordid work of the policeman and the criminal lawyer to the plane of a science, and placed crime detection beside medicine, biology, bacteriology, and chemistry. In these institutions of learning, young men who will ultimately graduate with a doctor's degree are trained to deal with criminals as natural scientists deal with the raw materials of the universe—trained in laboratories, as chemists, physicists, and biologists are trained. The professors who lecture in these universities are all followers of Dr. Hans Gross, who established the chair in the Austrian University of Graz. He it was who first laid down, in the chief authoritative text-book on the scientific detection of crime, his "Manual for Examining Judges," the principles and practices that underlie the science of criminalistics.

#### The Crime Students Often Assist the Police.

That this new science is now firmly rooted and flourishing is evidenced by the assistance which its votaries—"criminalists" they call themselves—lend to the authorities. The criminalistic students at the university have been called on time and time again by the Austrian police for assistance.

Indeed, so far has criminalistics developed that it even has its special organs; and of these the *Archiv für Kriminalanthropologie und Kriminalistik*, founded and edited by Dr. Gross, is the most respected.

No periodical devoted to engineering, medicine, or any of the applied sciences is more technical than Gross's remarkable *Archiv*. The human reptiles of the underworld are discussed as a zoologist considers a rattlesnake and his habits.

What a wealth of meaning is conveyed by such articles as those entitled "The Self-Mutilation of Hysterical Criminals," "Experi-

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mental Contribution on the Fauna of Corpses," "Invisible Handwriting and Its Detection," "Plaster Casts of Footprints," "A Biological Test for Distinguishing Human from Animal Blood," "Diagnosis of Suspicious Spots," "The Interpretation of Criminal Cipher Messages," "The Effect of Small-Calibre Bullets on the Human Body," "Arson and Homesickness," and "The Examination of Vehicle and Bicycle Tracks."

### Amazing Erudition of Professor Gross.

On many a contribution that appears in the *Archiv*, Professor Gross, the Nestor of criminalists, has some critical comment to make. His knowledge is encyclopædic. He knows more about modern firearms than any soldier, and more about old pistols and rifles than most antiquarians. He has made a profound study of the underworld's slang and of European and American vagabond signs —those curious hieroglyphs chalked on a doorstep or a wall to convey important information to the parasites of society. No man in Europe is so well versed in the wiles of the gipsy as he. He has so amazing a knowledge of the criminal mind that he must be placed in the front rank of European psychologists. There is not a handicraft that he has not studied, not a trick in photography that he does not know. His writings are studded with references to the literature of all lands and all times.

It is, therefore, not astonishing that such a man expects a criminalist, whether he be a detective, a lawyer, or a judge, to possess the versatility of an Admirable Crichton. "He should be a linguist and a draughtsman," he maintains. "He should know what a physician can tell him, what he should ask him; he must know the wiles of the poacher as well as those of the stock speculator; he should discern how a will was forged, and what was the sequence of events in a railway accident; he must know how professional gamblers cheated, how a boiler exploded, and how a lying horse-dealer rejuvenated a broken-down animal; he must be familiar with book-keeping, so that he can intelligently examine a merchant's accounts; he must understand the jargon of the underworld, must be capable of translating cipher messages, and must know the methods and tools of all artisans."

Gross speaks thus not because he is a university professor with a theory. For years he was himself an Austrian examining judge —a university-taught lawyer who entered the service of the State as a hunter of criminals, eventually to leave it for the purpose of elevating his profession to the dignity of a science. If anyone realizes the necessity of scientific methods in pursuing criminals, surely it is he.

The science of criminalistics which Professor Gross helped to found deals with such subjective phenomena as lying, hysteria, suggestion, defective mentality, and self-deception, and with such objective realities or facts as handwriting, bombs, daggers, pistols, photographs, crowbars, loaded dice, and thieves' slang. A scientific criminalist must, therefore, be familiar not only with the implements of crime, but with the mind and soul of crime. He must know criminals as they know themselves.

### Utilize the Lying Servant and the Cheating Tradesman.

To know criminals, mankind must be known. That knowledge cannot be acquired within the four walls of a university. Therefore the criminalist must be a man of the world. He must note the hypocrisy of social chatter, mark the customs of business men, artists, and workmen, compare one man with another. Particularly precious are the deceptions that are suffered. Welcome them, Gross urges. If you have been cheated by a tradesman or duped by a lying servant, you are acquiring splendid practice. Above all, note the lies, conscious and unconscious. No one yet ever told the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth about any event.

A prisoner insists that he is deaf. He wishes to avoid the grilling cross-examination to which he is subjected before indictment. He is tested very simply. A heavy weight is dropped on the floor behind him. He does not even wink. Thereby he proves conclusively that he is shamming. A deaf man would have felt the shock and looked round; the impostor never stirs.

Similarly the sham epileptic must be unmasked. "If epileptic convulsions occur at a critical moment during the examination, they must be regarded with suspicion," teaches Professor Gross. "How a man topples over is also an indication of the genuineness of his attack. A real epileptic generally falls face down, and often injures himself. A sham epileptic sinks to the floor, and tries to protect himself from injury with his hands or elbows. If he is artful enough to fall like a log, face down, he is usually not artful enough to prevent his face from twitching with pain. Besides, there is that appalling, characteristic shriek uttered by an epileptic—a shriek that no one will ever forget who has once heard it. If the

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man under examination cries out more than once or for a long time, he is surely shamming. But, however clever he may be, he cannot mimic the muscular twitchings of the shoulder muscles or that terrible pallor of the epileptic."

### Making the Map of the Crime.

The objective side of crime is particularly amenable to scientific analysis, and is approached by the criminalist from an entirely new angle. There must be no haphazard removal to the police station of incriminating evidence, no indiscriminate fumbling for clues in the disorder left by a housebreaker. "Touch nothing until you have carefully noted the exact position of every object," is Professor Gross's rule. An empty box or flower-pot is inverted over a footprint in the snow, to shield it from the sun. Planks are laid in a room, so that the blood-stains that surround a corpse may not be obliterated by the feet of police officers. A drawing, a clay model, or a photograph of the scene is then prepared. Not a single revolting detail of possible importance is omitted. That is done so that, long after all tangible evidence may have been removed, the crime may still be studied as readily as if it had been committed yesterday.

So important is this matter of topographically mapping the crime that all criminalists follow Gross's rules. Bertillon has devised a special camera for the purpose. His lens forms an image on the sensitized plate at a fixed focus, and the print made from the negative is mounted on a cardboard in an accurately measured space along the edges of which a scale in millimetres — four-hundredths of an inch — is printed. The exact distance between any two points in the picture can be measured by referring to that scale.



*How the parts of a rifle-cane are disposed in the pockets of the criminal. The particular cane here shown is perhaps the most interesting in Professor Gross's entire collection—at least, from the psychological standpoint. The steel barrel of a rifle-cane is usually covered with bamboo or wood, so as to make the deception more perfect. The criminal who fashioned this cane had a practical knowledge of human nature which made him decide to adopt a different method. He made no attempt whatever to conceal the shining steel barrel (the stick proper) with wood. "As I walk along with this," he reasoned, "no one will believe that I am carrying a rifle." His reasoning proved correct. Despite the flash of the steel in the sunlight, no policeman arrested him. Not one of the hundreds of people whom he met, apparently, suspected that he was carrying a dangerous weapon.*

The mere recording of details is in itself sometimes sufficient to reveal what in criminalistics is called the "error in the situation" — that unconsidered trifle which betrays because it was a monumental blunder.

"I remember the case of a man who apparently had committed suicide by hanging himself," Gross says in his lecture. "The body hung in the middle of the room from the chandelier, with the feet half a yard from the floor. Besides a writing-desk and a chair, the room contained two armchairs and a settle. The writing-chair stood in front of the desk, the armchairs were in a corner near a smoking-stand, the settle, covered with papers and books, was next to the writing-chair. I confess that the case puzzled me. Not until I began to write my report did the error in the situation flash on me. I asked myself, 'But *how* did he hang himself?' Men have strangled themselves with their feet on the floor merely by leaning forward from a suspending rope, but no man ever hanged himself with his feet half a yard from the floor without climbing on something. *That something was nowhere near him!* Somebody must have helped him — or he was murdered. Then it was that I really began to investigate. It turned out that he was not a suicide at all, and that he had not been murdered. He had died a natural death. Aged and broken in health, he had been left



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by his relatives in the care of two servants, a cook and a valet, who had attended a ball one night without asking permission. During their absence the old man was stricken. He died, helpless and alone. When they discovered him lifeless, the terrified servants foolishly tried to conceal their negligence by giving his death the appearance of suicide. With the help of a broom-stick, a rope was fastened to the chandelier. The valet lifted the corpse into position and the cook slipped the noose over his head. But they forgot to upset a chair near the suspended body!"

In the interpretation of the evidence the criminalist employs experts when he can; but he is the commander of the expert, not his subordinate. The physician, the chemist, the bacteriologist, the mineralogist, the toxicologist, all may be called on to throw light on a crime. What is the composition of a greasy spot in the elbow of a coat? The chemist will answer. That smear of blood on a stone—is it human blood or not? The microscopist will tell. Is this last testament a forgery or not? The handwriting expert must be consulted.

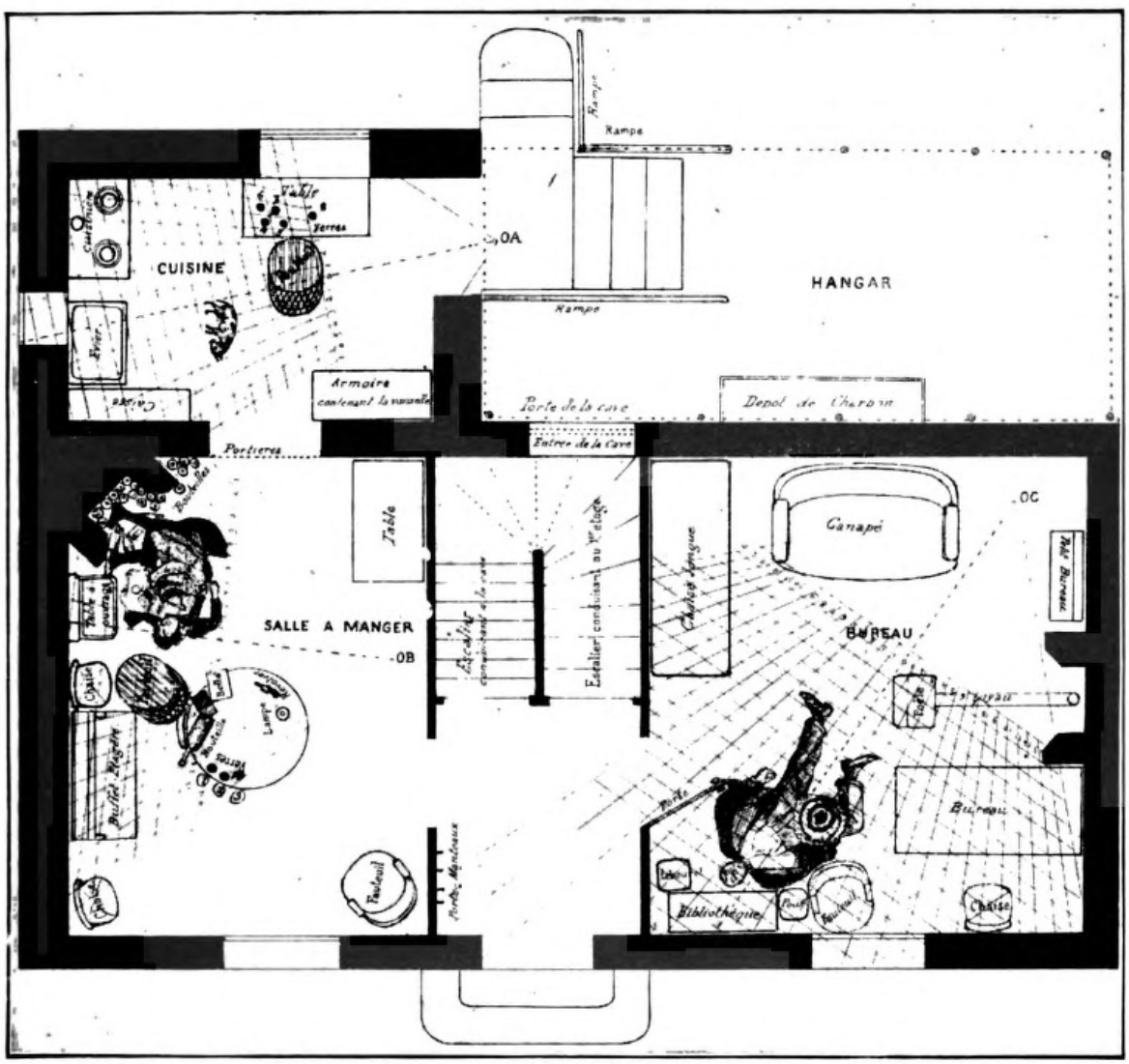
An expert, as Gross uses the term, is not only a scientist who has worked in a single narrow groove, but any man who has acquired special knowledge of a trade or handicraft. How the special knowledge of an intelligent craftsman may be tellingly employed may be instanced by the robbery of a banker—a robbery which was studied with the aid of simple artisans in the manner advocated by Professor Gross.

Just before going to bed each night it was the habit of that banker to lock a door between his bedchamber and an adjoining room. To rob him it was necessary to accomplish the paradoxical feat of preventing him from locking the door and yet of leading him to believe that he had done so. A



*One of the series of three photographs that Bertillon made of the Mathieu murder, and from which the topographical chart printed on the opposite page was made. Mathieu and his wife were killed by burglars on January 2nd, 1909. In accordance with the modern system, the Parisian Secret Service (Sûreté) photographed the scene of the crime with a camera having a standard focus. The picture thus obtained, also of standard size, was mounted on a card bearing an accurate scale in millimetres. By reference to this scale it was possible to plot accurately the positions of the more important objects, as shown in the lower right-hand corner of the plan on the next page.*

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*Bertillon's photographic method of studying a crime topographically. A picture is made with a special camera, the lens of which forms its image at a standard focus. The print that is made from the negative thus obtained is mounted on a cardboard provided with an accurate scale in millimetres completely surrounding the picture. By reference to the scale it is possible to draw an exact plan of the crime, and also to measure within a fraction of an inch the distance that separates any two objects in the picture.*

forcible entry was out of the question. During the day someone thoroughly familiar with his habits had slipped into the room adjoining the bedchamber. A very small and carefully-carved block of wood was inserted in the recess which received the bolt of the door-lock. When the banker turned the key that night the bolt could not be shot. The effect was quite the same as if the door had already been locked. Deceived into believing that he had already absent-mindedly locked the door, as he afterwards admitted, he went to bed. He awoke the next morning to find himself robbed of every valuable he possessed.

Foolishly enough, the thief had left the piece of wood in place—the only clue to his identity. To make the most of it, mechanics had to be consulted—each man an expert in his craft.

The first man who was asked to pass an opinion on the bit of wood was a carpenter. At once he said :—

"A more careful workman than one of us made that. It was not necessary to fill the hole completely ; a small rough piece that was long enough would have answered the purpose."

Next the opinion of a turner was sought.

"That's the work of a wood-carver. I could not make that, and neither could any ordinary wood-turner."

Lastly a wood-carver was questioned.

"The man who made this has worked on shoemakers' lasts," was the verdict.

Why ? Because the channels and ridges

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left on the wood were the marks of a last-maker's tools.

That led to the arrest of a discharged valet, a man who, when he was not employed in some private family, returned to his old trade of last-making.

"I confess," says Gross, "that sometimes I have employed experts with no definite purpose in view. Once I called in cutlers and handed them the knife with which a murder had been committed. They told me that such knives are made only in Northern Bohemia—a piece of information that enabled me to capture the man I wanted. A wood-turner drew my attention to the fact that a wooden object found on the scene of a crime had been made by a left-handed man. A suspect who had been arrested, and who loudly protested his innocence, came from a distant town. I went there and combed it for a left-handed wood-turner. Eventually I found him. It turned out that my suspect had purchased the object from him. Philologists have determined the nationality of letter-writers for me. Schoolmasters have told me the probable age of a bank-note forger merely from a few old-fashioned strokes of the pen. And astronomers have calculated for me what *spring* day corresponded in luminosity at dusk with a certain day in *autumn;* thus I could study the scene of a crime in the *spring* in order to discover if this or that could be seen at a certain hour in *autumn*."

### The Strangest Collection in the World.

As a new insect found in the woods is compared by its scientific captor with similar insects in the glass cases of a museum in order to ascertain to what species it belongs, so Professor Gross insists on comparing one housebreaker's methods with those of another in order to learn with what criminal species he is dealing. To that end the tools of crime must be handled, tested, and classified. Thus originated the Criminalistic Institute of Graz—probably the most remarkable museum and laboratory of its kind in the world, the forerunner of similar museums now to be found in the universities of Lausanne, Lüttich, and Bucharest, and in the police headquarters of the great European cities.

In the crowded cases of this most terrible and fascinating of institutions may be found the frightful relics of murders and robberies committed the world over. Here all the vileness, all the wickedness, all the unutterable cruelty of mankind is distilled. Every object is an eloquent symbol of treachery, evil, meanness, and vice. Around each a ghastly story of human frailty or passion, hereditary irresponsibility or failure, could be woven.

"These skulls of murdered men," said Professor Gross to me, as he swept his hand over the most gruesome section of his collection—"these skulls are not here because they are curious and horrible souvenirs of forgotten assassinations. Each one, you will notice, has been fractured. This one was shattered by the blow of a hammer. Here you have one that was split by an axe. The club of a Styrian peasant, crazy with drink, crushed this one. And so you will find that each has been broken in a different way. The various instruments with which all these injuries can be inflicted are likewise to be found in the museum. It is obvious that much can be learned by objectively studying both the instruments and the effects they produce. Suppose, for example, that one of my students should some day be called upon to analyse a murder committed with a weapon of which no trace can be found. The message of the fractured skull must be read. Here he has studied the more common, as well as some of the more unusual, methods and implements whereby such crimes are committed. With the aid of this or some similar collection he may be able to deduce from a careful examination of the murdered man's head what manner of weapon was wielded by the unknown criminal."

### Some Superstitions of Criminals.

Superstitions, too, must be studied in the Institute of Graz to fit oneself for the career of a criminalist. Among criminals, the old superstitions that cling to rabbits' feet, hangman's ropes, coffin-wood, still live. What may seem idiotic carelessness on the part of a robber may prove to be simply a superstitious practice. It is a widespread belief among burglars, for example, that if something of themselves be left in the place that they have "visited," they must inevitably escape punishment. They wash their hands in a basin, or deliberately leave an incriminating footprint in a flower-bed. One housebreaker, according to Gross, even went so far as to cut himself and smear the panel of a closet with his own blood, thereby unintentionally puzzling his pursuers, who were quite convinced that two men had committed the robbery, and that, in dividing the loot, a terrible struggle had taken place, in which one of them had been severely, perhaps fatally, injured. A remarkably skilful jewellery

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thief always asked for a "fine emerald necklace" on entering a shop that he intended to rob. Emeralds meant good luck to him.

Hence the Institute at Graz is well stocked with love-philtres, ashes of curious substances, dream-books, charts, magic verses to be mumbled when rifling a cupboard, and much of the necromantic machinery that is supposed to have been discarded centuries ago.

Cabinet after cabinet supplies material for the study of objective criminalistics. In one case is an array of poisons, carefully ticketed, so that the students may learn not only the favourite methods of administering them, but also their physiological effects and the best means of detecting them. A second case is devoted entirely to arsenic—the most historic and still the most popular of poisons. In a third case is a startling collection of deadly sword-canes and rifle-canes, most of them so ingeniously fashioned that they easily deceive the eye. Hanging on the walls are cords which were made by prisoners from torn shirts and trousers, unravelled socks, and even straw, and which were used to drop messages through cell windows to waiting confederates without. Every criminal is represented by the devices of his calling—the cheating gambler by his fraudulent roulette-wheels, the American thug by his brass knuckles, lead-pipe bludgeons, and sand-bags, and the burglar by the jemmies and keys that he carries on a shoulder-strap beneath his coat.

As the museum serves to give the student a practical working knowledge of the implements and methods of crime, so the laboratory with which it is inseparably connected teaches him the technical methods of permanently recording and preserving the evidence of crime for subsequent study.

It is safe to say that fifty per cent. of these laboratory methods—methods now adopted by the more enlightened police officials of Europe—are of Gross's devising. He it was who saw the criminalistic possibilities of composite photography and ingeniously modified Galton's method of making a single type or average picture of sixty persons, a method which, as everyone knows, consists in photographing each one of the sixty on the same plate. Gross's modification enables a detective to ascertain the probable appearance of a criminal five years ago. How? Simply by photographing on one plate a picture of the man taken ten years ago and a picture taken to-day. The result is a portrait which averages his age and which shows him as he was five years ago.

The laboratory at Graz is utilized to prepare and mount paper documents which have been torn into a thousand pieces, or burned, so that they can be read; to photograph finger-prints on a glass bottle or a mahogany table; to reveal blood-stains all but washed out of a towel; to translate cryptograms written in jail by prisoners desperately trying to prove an alibi; to use a microscope in searching for incriminating evidence too minute for the naked eye; to make casts of footprints and of the indentations left by a tool in a window-frame or door.

In such laboratory work, a criminalist shrinks from nothing. When it became necessary to find out in an actual case whether a bank-note could be preserved by swallowing it, a Dutch criminalist of the modern Gross school, M. L. Q. Van Ledden-Hulsebosch, instead of reading many books on the digestibility of paper, actually swallowed two twenty-five-gulden bills, and noted the result with such success that he convicted his man. The filth that encrusts a criminal's clothes, hands, and feet must be treated as something peculiarly precious. It must be preserved, and therefore there must be laboratory practice in dealing with it. Accordingly, the students at Graz are taught to beat clothes in soft but pliable paper bags, to collect the settlings, and to examine them microscopically. The dust on a machinist's coat will differ from that beaten out of the coat of a bricklayer. The mud that clings to a shoe may be damning. Gross tells his students how a man suspected of robbing a flour-mill was convicted simply by his shoe-soles. Two layers of mud clung to them, separated by a layer of flour. The suspect had first walked in mud, and then on the flour-covered floor of the mill, and back again into mud.

### What Gross Can Deduce From a Footprint.

No Indian in Cooper's "Leather-Stocking Tales" ever saw so much in a footprint as Gross reveals in his laboratory course. That footprint in a country road is just a footprint to the casual passer-by. To a criminalist of Gross's penetration and laboratory experience, it is a means of visualizing him who made it. Gross can tell you whether the man walked rapidly or slowly, whether he was a labourer or a "gentleman," whether he was tired or not, whether he walked briskly or shuffled. If a stick was carried, the impressions that it leaves are highly significant. They show

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whether the man who carried it ran or walked. How? Suppose, says Gross, that he held it in his right hand, and that he strolled along leisurely. He will touch the ground with the ferrule near the head of every second footprint of his right foot. Suppose that he walked fast and that he actually used the stick in walking. The ferrule will touch the ground at every left footprint.

But what is the practical good of all this? How is all this tediously-gained knowledge applied? Consider a typical case—one that is encountered over and over again.

A suburban house has been broken into and robbed. From a window near the ground the conspicuous marks of many feet point in the direction of a highway. At least four persons have tramped through the soft earth of a flower-bed—one of them a woman, from the shape and smallness of the imprint. So the uncritical would decide.

What does the criminalist say? He inspects the impressions minutely. It cannot be denied that they were made by four different pairs of *shoes*. But it does not necessarily follow that they were made by four different pairs of *feet*. They are very conspicuous—these footprints. In fact, every one of them is deeply stamped in place; not one is really obscure. That is a suspicious circumstance. *They were intended to be seen!* Otherwise the trail would have been lost here and there; they would not be so easy to follow; the footsteps of one thief would have mingled with those of his fellows.

A cast is taken of the different varieties of impressions. The weight of the body is not normally distributed on the ball and heel. The whole scheme is clear now. One man—at the most two men—tried to throw the pursuers off the scent by tying to their feet shoes which they brought with them for the purpose—tied them heel forward. He who wore the women's shoes forgot to change his masculine stride—forgot that a long step and a little foot are not compatible with each other. One of his companions made the egregious mistake of securing to his feet a pair of shoes smaller than his own; the mark of a big heel and a little toe are distinctly visible in the cast.

### The Technique of Interpreting Blood-Stains.

Similarly there is a technique of interpreting blood-stains. It was noticed that on the shirt of the coatless victim in what the Austrian criminalists call the "Krumpendorf murder" was a peculiar spot in the region of the shoulder. It seemed as if that part of the shirt had been subjected to pressure. Finally it was decided that the blood-spattered knees of the murderer had pressed against the dead man's shoulder. The impression of a fabric was distinctly visible and was readily photographed. Months after, a man was arrested and charged with having committed the crime. The evidence that convicted him was a pair of trousers found in his possession—*trousers which had been washed*, and which were made of a fabric microscopically identical in pattern and weave with that which had left its mark on the bloody shirt.

There was also the case of a drunkard who reeled past a German beer-garden, cursing loudly and hurling imprecations at everyone he saw. Stung by the insults, a dragoon leaped to his feet and split the man's head with a sabre. All efforts to discover the guilty dragoon were unavailing. His soldier companions shielded him. All the dragoons who were known to have been in the beer-garden at the time were lined up and their sabres were taken away. Not a trace of blood could be found on a single blade under the microscope. But on one sabre an almost invisible fragment of fresh grass in a minute crevice was perceptible. To the naked eye it was invisible; under the laboratory microscope it was a conspicuous blotch of green. The dragoon to whom that sabre belonged was arrested. The criminalist who analysed the case concluded that the bloody blade had been wiped on the wet grass and then dried with a cloth, which had removed all except that infinitesimal speck of green. The conclusion was correct, as the confession of the guilty man ultimately proved.

Crime detection after this fashion is evidently accompanied by a keen appreciation of what most of us would consider trifles—a word that is not found in the lexicon of criminalistics.

Because little things may be vitally significant, every detail that may have a possible bearing on a crime is noted in the report that accompanies the topographical study—even the state of the weather. That seems ridiculously trivial. But Gross can tell you of an instance in which it became vitally important to ascertain whether or not it had rained at eight o'clock on a certain evening. Because no note had been taken of the weather at the time of the preliminary examination, an innocent man was convicted of arson—convicted and sentenced to eighteen years' imprisonment—on the

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perjured testimony of a woman who claimed to have sat on the trunk of a fallen tree two hundred yards from her own home on the fateful evening. Five years later the case was re-opened. After consulting all the available meteorological records, and after conducting a local inquiry that lasted for weeks, it was established that at eight o'clock on the evening of the crime it had rained hard—so hard that no sane woman would sit in the drenching downpour, only two hundred steps from her own house, for half an hour.

In a murder mystery in which Professor Gross figured as the criminalist, a single drop of blood played a part. Near a glass door leading to a courtyard blood was found. The spots were far from the victim; hence the blood was that of the murderer himself. He had stopped for a moment to look through the glass door in order to see if the way was clear. To the left and near another door was a table covered by a large light cloth that hung to the very floor. *Beneath the table and behind the cloth* was a spot of blood. How did it lodge there? The table-cloth itself was bloodless. Gross thought for a moment. Then he opened the second door. A current of air blew the cloth aside. Clearly the drop of blood had been wafted under the table as the door was opened. To pass out easily the door would naturally be opened with the right hand. Hence the murderer must have been wounded in the left hand. The police were told to look for a man whose left hand was bandaged. They found him.

### How a Man's Body Reveals His Calling.

Open a dead man's mouth and you can often tell his calling in life. Your glass-blower's front teeth are either chipped or broken, because he is not always careful in the manner of wielding his pipe. Clarinettists, sugar-factory hands, match-makers, bakers, and miners generally reveal their vocations by their dental defects. The hanging cheeks of the trombonist, the club-like fingers of the pianist, the callous growths on the hands of the cobbler, unmistakably tell their story of personal habits. One shoulder of a barber is higher than the other.

Look at a man's hands and they will tell you whether he is a pickpocket. Those long, delicate fingers, pampered like the digits of a violinist, exercised even when no purse is in sight so that they may lose none of their flexibility for want of practice, and smeared at night with glycerine or cold cream to keep them supple—no criminalist who has followed Gross can mistake them. If the owner of the hands carries no cane and wears no stiff cuffs, suspicion gives way to absolute certainty.

### Our Mediæval Methods.

Contrast this scientific method of dealing with crime with our own.

Not only is the ordinary unskilled policeman and detective an anachronism, but the book-taught criminal lawyer and judge as well. Indeed, Professor Gross has more admiration for an untutored gendarme, whom experience has acquainted with the devices of pickpockets and swindlers, than the educated lawyer who knows only the *law* and not the *facts* of the crime.

"What would the world say if a physician were let loose on the community without ever having laid eyes on a sick man?" he asked, as we discussed the new science in his study. "What would the world say if that physician had read many books and had listened to many lectures on psychological and physiological processes, but had never witnessed the actual processes at work in the human body? If medicines and their effects had been described to him, but he had no clinical knowledge of healthy and diseased organisms?

"Yet that is how those who administer the criminal law are trained," he continued. "Officials, whether they be criminal lawyers, prosecuting attorneys, or trial judges, begin their careers armed only with book knowledge. They have never seen a burglar or a horse thief; they know nothing of his methods except what they have read in newspapers, novels, or law reports. No one has shown them a jemmy or a set of skeleton keys. Of a criminal's mode of life, of his moral code, of his loves and hates, they have not the faintest conception. How a criminal talks, how he writes and thinks, how he is psychologically affected in prison, how he came to be a criminal, all this and much more they do not know.

"I have written many books and papers in years past to prove that we cannot go on in the old way. We want the facts of crime without prejudice. We want to introduce the methods of natural science in the study of crime—the laboratory method of the physicist who actually handles the thing he studies."

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# PORTRAITS OF CELEBRITIES AT DIFFERENT AGES.



AGE 8.

## THE RIGHT HON. REGINALD McKENNA.



AGE 23.—CAMBRIDGE BLUE.

IT is just half a century since Reginald McKenna, Secretary of State for the Home Department, was born in London. After some time spent at school in France and Germany, he went, at fifteen years of age, to King's College, London, where he quickly became head of the school in mathematics. He won a mathematical scholarship at Trinity Hall, Cambridge, a college renowned as much for its rowing fame as for its academic achievements.

When he went to Trinity Hall, in complete ignorance of the difficulties before him, he confided to a friend his intention of rowing in the Cambridge eight before he went down. He achieved his object, though probably at some cost to his studies, as in 1887 he rowed bow in the inter-'Varsity boatrace, when Cambridge gained an easy victory. He also won the Grand Challenge Cup at Henley in 1886, and the Stewards' Challenge Cup in the following year, after which he never competed again.

After being called to the Bar in 1887 he threw himself into politics with the same fervour he had devoted to rowing, and became candidate for Clapham in 1888, but did not succeed in winning the seat from the Conservatives in the 1892 election.



AGE 28.—CANDIDATE FOR CLAPHAM.

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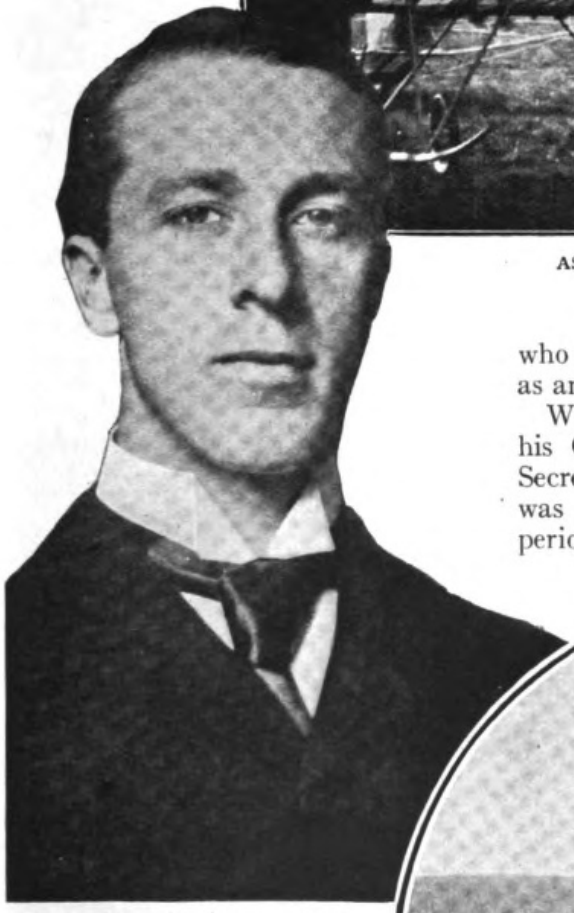
However, another opportunity of realizing his ambition quickly offered itself. In 1895 he was selected out of over twenty candidates to stand for North Monmouthshire,



AS AN AVIATOR—HE WAS THE FIRST MEMBER OF THE CABINET TO FLY.

who understood national finance, and was regarded as an authority on Parliamentary procedure.

When Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman formed his Government Mr. McKenna became Financial Secretary to the Treasury under Mr. Asquith, who was then Chancellor of the Exchequer. This period, it may be interesting to add, has since been



AGE 31—ENTERED PARLIAMENT.
*Photo. Robert Faulkner & Co.*

which constituency he has represented ever since.

On entering the House he quickly proceeded to make a name for himself, and was soon looked upon as one of the coming men. One of the most industrious of private members on the Liberal benches, he never missed an all-night sitting. He acquired, too, a reputation for being one of the few members



SWIMMING IS ONE OF HIS FAVOURITE RECREATIONS.



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known in Treasury circles as the Golden Age.

After a year came promotion to the Cabinet as President of the Board of Education. In his new sphere he instituted medical inspection of school children, and by reorganizing secondary schools brought about a great increase in their number and efficiency.

The year 1908 brought further promotion to the position of First Lord of the Admiralty, at that time a peculiarly difficult post. His work at the Admiralty, however, is still too fresh in the public recollection to need recalling.

In 1911 came his appointment to the Home Office, where his position has been far from an enviable one, if only for the reason that to him has fallen the task of dealing with the problems raised by the behaviour in and out of prison of the militant Suffragettes. In the House during the last few years he has been identified chiefly with the Welsh Church Bill, the Mental Deficiency Act, and the subject of Criminal Justice Administration.

In a comparatively short time he has served in many departments, and it can safely be said that no Minister has gained or retained more surely the respect and goodwill of the permanent officials.

Mr. McKenna is a man of many hobbies. Bridge, golf, chess, and swimming all find in him a devotee, and he was the first winner of the House of Commons chess tournament for the cup presented by Mr. Bonar Law.



PRESENT DAY—WITH HIS SON AND HEIR.

Six years ago he married a daughter of Sir Herbert Jekyll, and of his many interests in life by no means the least is his pride in his son and heir.

And he is, furthermore, the holder of an interesting record, and one that is far from being generally known—he was the first member of the Cabinet to make a trip in an aeroplane or to go down in a submarine.

MRS. MCKENNA AND HER SON MICHAEL.

*Photo. by J. Weston & Son.*

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# The Story of Peter the Rogue.

### A Story for Children.

### Retold from the Norwegian by FLORENCE TAPSELL.



### Illustrated by H. R. Millar.

IN an old farm-house, with a spinning-wheel, guns upon the wall, strings of onions and sides of bacon hanging from the roof, and hens roosting in the corner under the rafters, there once lived a farmer with his wife and two children. These two children were twins, a boy and a girl, and so like were they to each other you could scarce tell them apart save for their clothes. The lassie was a good lassie enough as lassies go; but the boy, whose name was Peter, was of but little use in the world. All he cared about was playing tricks upon people, and do his share of work upon the farm he would not.

By and by the man and woman died, so that the lad and lassie were left to fend for themselves. The lassie, she worked long, long hours and toiled from morning to night; but Peter would do nothing at all.

"Peter," she said, one day, "you go from bad to worse."

Peter said nothing; but he winked and smiled a merry "don't care" smile.

"Soon you will have spent all that we have," the lassie continued. "What, think you, are we to live on then?"

"Oh, I'll go and play a trick on some poor fool. There's many a fool on this earth just waiting to be tricked," said Peter, and he began to sing, "Hey-ho for the trickster!"

"I daresay," cried his sister. "You are always ready enough to play your pranks, but how will that keep us in food and clothes? That is what I should like to know."

"Don't be so huffy, sister, dear. I'll try my best," called Peter after her. Turning a somersault over a barrel he came down upon his feet; then he scratched his head reflectively. As he scratched the twinkle in his eyes grew wider. A smile began to dawn upon his face and grew until it became a grin; then, laughing heartily to himself, he set off to the King's palace.

The King was standing at the door as Peter came up.

"Well, Peter, where are you off to?" he said, for Peter was known even to the King because of the pranks he played.

"I'm trying to find someone to play a trick on," quoth Peter, touching his forelock.

"Come and play a trick upon me, then," said the King, for he was wanting to be amused.

"I can't play a trick upon you to-day, for I have left my bag of tricks at home," said the lad.

"Run home and fetch them," commanded the King. "I know you are a clever youngster, but I doubt if you could trick me. At any rate, I should like you to try; so off you go and fetch your bag of tricks, if you can't do a trick without them."

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"I've cut my foot and couldn't walk so far," said Peter, beginning to blubber and to hobble along like a lame duck.

"That is no excuse. I will lend you a horse."

"Oh, but I couldn't ride a horse," cried Peter, as if he were terribly frightened.

"Ah, but you can try," quoth the King, who was not to be gainsaid. "You shall be lifted into the saddle, and then surely you can manage to stick on."

Peter begged and begged that they wouldn't put him upon a horse, but the King would have his way. They hoisted Peter on to the horse's back, and there he sat for all the world like a bag of beans, flopping backwards and forwards, and this way and that, with every motion of the horse. The King stood watching, and laughed until he cried. Never had he seen such a funny sight in all his life.

On rode Peter, first on one side of the road, then on the other, clinging to the horse's mane whenever the animal began to trot, and sometimes hanging with his arms around its neck. But no sooner was he out of the King's sight round a bend of the road than up sat Peter, steady and straight as could be, and, handling the reins as if he had been born to it, galloped away to the town.

As soon as he reached the town he sold first the horse and then the saddle, and took the money home to the farm.

"Say," he said to his sister, showing her the gold, "I've done a trick to-day that's worth more than a year's work on the farm," and he lay down before the fire singing, "Hey-ho for the trickster!"

Now, up at the palace the King waited and waited for Peter to return with his bag of tricks. But when hour after hour passed and no Peter appeared, the King guessed that Peter had played a trick upon him without the help of the bag of tricks, and he was by no means pleased at the thought. Peter should play no more tricks upon him or upon anyone else. Before the sun had risen again Peter should have lost his head. The King set off to the farm where Peter lived.

But Peter got word that the King was on his way to the farm.

"Put the porridge pot on the fire, Sis," he said. "Just for once I'll make the porridge for you."

So the lassie put the porridge on to boil, and Peter he stirred and stirred until it was steaming hot and likely to bubble over the side of the pot. Just as the King came up to the door Peter took the pot off the fire and stood it on the great round chopping-block, then went on stirring as before.

The King looked at Peter stirring the porridge. He looked at the chopping-block, and he looked at the pot of steaming porridge. The porridge was just upon the boil, yet there was no fire under the pot. The King couldn't make it out. He was so much taken up with looking he quite forgot what he had come for.

"How much do you want for that pot?" he asked.

"It isn't for sale," said Peter, and went on stirring.

"I'll give you a good price for it," said the King. "Why don't you want to sell it?"

"Well, you see, it saves both firing and labour, chopping and carrying," said Peter.

"I'll give you a hundred dollars for it. Surely that's fair enough," said the King. "Besides I'm willing to forget you've tricked me out of a horse and saddle if you will sell me the pot."

"Very well, it shall be as you wish," replied Peter. He pocketed the hundred dollars with a smile, and the King rode away with the porridge-pot on the saddle before him.

When the King came to the palace he sent out invitations to his nobles and their ladies, bidding them to a great feast. The feast was to be cooked before their eyes in a wonderful pot that boiled with no fire under it.

The guests arrived. The pot was placed in the middle of the room, so that all could see how it steamed and boiled without the aid of fire.

The King was so pleased with himself and his new pot that he did not notice their smiles and nudges. He kept walking round and round the pot, chuckling and saying, "A wonderful pot. Wait a little. It will boil directly. Ah, I think I see the steam beginning to rise. A wonderful pot."

Still the pot showed no signs of boiling. The King's smile gradually turned to a frown, and he began to curse instead of chuckle. All at once he cried out, "It's that rogue, Peter. He's tricked me again!"

Without waiting to explain to his guests the meaning of his words, the King rushed from the palace, flung himself upon his horse, and rode at full gallop to the farm where Peter lived.

But Peter was on the watch and saw him coming up the hill. He took a sheep's bladder filled with blood and told his sister to hide it in the bosom of her dress; then, just as the King reached the door, he whispered some words in her ear and jumped into bed.

"Where is that scoundrel Peter?" shouted the King.

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"He isn't very well, so he has gone to bed," faltered the lassie, who was terrified at the sight of the angry King. "I think he is asleep," she added.

"Then go and wake him up," roared the King.

"Please, sir, I daren't. He has such a violent temper that many a time he has threatened to kill me if I should wake him. Please, your Majesty, don't make me!" pleaded the lassie.

But the King would not listen to her pleading.

"I have a worse temper than your brother," he said, "and if you refuse to obey me I will kill you; so it will be all the same in the end," and he put his hand to his knife.

"Mercy!—mercy!" cried the lassie. "The fire is hotter than the pan after all, and a King's wish is law; therefore I will wake my brother even if it costs me my life."

She ran to the bed and began to pull her brother by the arm.

"Peter, awake; the King would have word with you," she cried in his ear.

Peter awoke and sprang up with a roar like that of an angry lion. He had a knife in his hand, and with it he stabbed the bladder of blood hidden in his sister's bosom. A stream of blood gushed out, and the lassie fell upon the floor with a thud.

"Peter," cried the King, "I thought you were only a rogue; but now I know you are a knave, for in your anger you have slain your sister."

"There's no harm done so long as I have breath to blow with," said Peter.

He took a horn from a nail in the wall, put one end of it against his sister's mouth, and the other into his own; then he began to blow. After a minute or two the lassie sighed and opened her eyes; then she got up and went about her work just as if nothing at all out of the way had happened

Amazed, the King cried out: "Bless me, Peter, can you kill people and bring them back to life again?"

"There's nothing in that," said Peter, modestly. "With this hasty temper of mine, where should I be if I couldn't? It's the horn that does it."

"I also have a hasty temper," said the King. "Give me that horn, and I will pay you a thousand dollars for it. Besides that, I will forget all about how you tricked me with the pot, and the stealing of my horse as well. Now, who could say fairer than that?"



"HE KEPT WALKING ROUND AND ROUND THE POT, CHUCKLING AND SAYING, 'A WONDERFUL POT. WAIT A LITTLE. IT WILL BOIL DIRECTLY.'"

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"But, your Majesty, if I sell you the horn, what shall I do when I am hasty?"

"You must learn to govern your temper," said the King, haughtily.

Peter looked at the horn and he looked at the thousand dollars as if still in doubt; then he put the money into his pocket and the horn into the King's hand.

When the King got back to the palace he found the Queen was very angry with him for having made such a fool of himself.

"You are the laughing-stock of the whole place," she cried.

His conscience had been telling him the same thing all the way home; but it was exasperating to hear it from the lips of his wife. The King fell into such a rage he pulled out the knife with which he had meant to kill Peter, and stabbed the Queen to the heart.

"Oh, oh!" cried the nobles and their ladies. "You have killed the Queen!"

"What if I have?" replied the King, airily. "I will soon put her right again."

He took the horn out of his pocket, laid the open end upon the Queen's mouth, and began to blow. He blew and blew until his cheeks became so round and red they looked like the setting sun on a stormy night; but he could not blow life into the body of the Queen. There was a grand funeral and the King was a widower.

One day, soon after this, the King secured the sharpest knife to be found in all his kingdom and went out to settle with Peter once and for all.

But Peter had had word of his coming.

"Sister," he said, "you must lend me some of your clothes; then do you go to the old home and stay with Grannie for a few days. I will give you money for the journey."

The lassie packed up her clothes and away she went, delighted at the chance of a real good holiday. Peter dressed himself in his sister's clothes, and sat down at the spinning-wheel in the kitchen.

He held his apron before his eyes and was sobbing bitterly when the King rode up.

"Where is that brother of yours?" cried the King, hardly able to mouth the words for rage.

"He's gone away to visit Grannie," sobbed Peter. "He knew you were coming, so he ran away, and he's left me here all alone. Oh, I'm so frightened and hungry, too," and Peter began to sob just as a fearsome lassie might have done."

"Don't cry. It's none of your fault what Peter may have done," said the King, kindly. "You shall come back to the palace with me, and I will see you want for nothing."

Peter was quite willing, and he rode to the palace before the King on the King's own horse. The King could see nothing of the smiles that spread over Peter's face. When they came to the palace he said the lassie was to be given fine clothes and treated just as if she were his own daughter—for the King had no children of his own.

Peter lived at the palace quite a long time as the King's daughter, and he had a very good time indeed. But at last there came a prince, who fell in love with the King's adopted daughter, and a marriage was arranged between them. The palace was decked for the wedding, the guests invited, and the feast cooked.

The day of the wedding dawned. Peter dared not remain any longer, so before the sun had risen he stole out of the palace and ran into the wood.

When it was found the bride was missing, search was made far and wide. Even the King himself rode out to hunt for his adopted daughter. As he rode through the wood he came upon Peter squatting under a tree.

"Halloa, is that you, Peter?" he cried.

"Me it is, for I can't sit in two places at once," replied Peter.

"That is well. Now I have found you, you shall come with me and pay the penalty of your tricks."

"There seems to be no help for it, so I may as well jump into it as creep into it," cried Peter, saucily, and followed the King's horse gaily enough.

When they came to the palace the King gave orders that Peter was to be shut up in a barrel and rolled from the top of a high mountain into the sea, only he was first to be left in the barrel for three days and three nights that he might have time to think about his sins.

So for three days Peter lay tucked up in the barrel on the top of the mountain. But he wasn't a bit cast down—not he. All the time he sang as gaily as could be, and the words of his song were:—

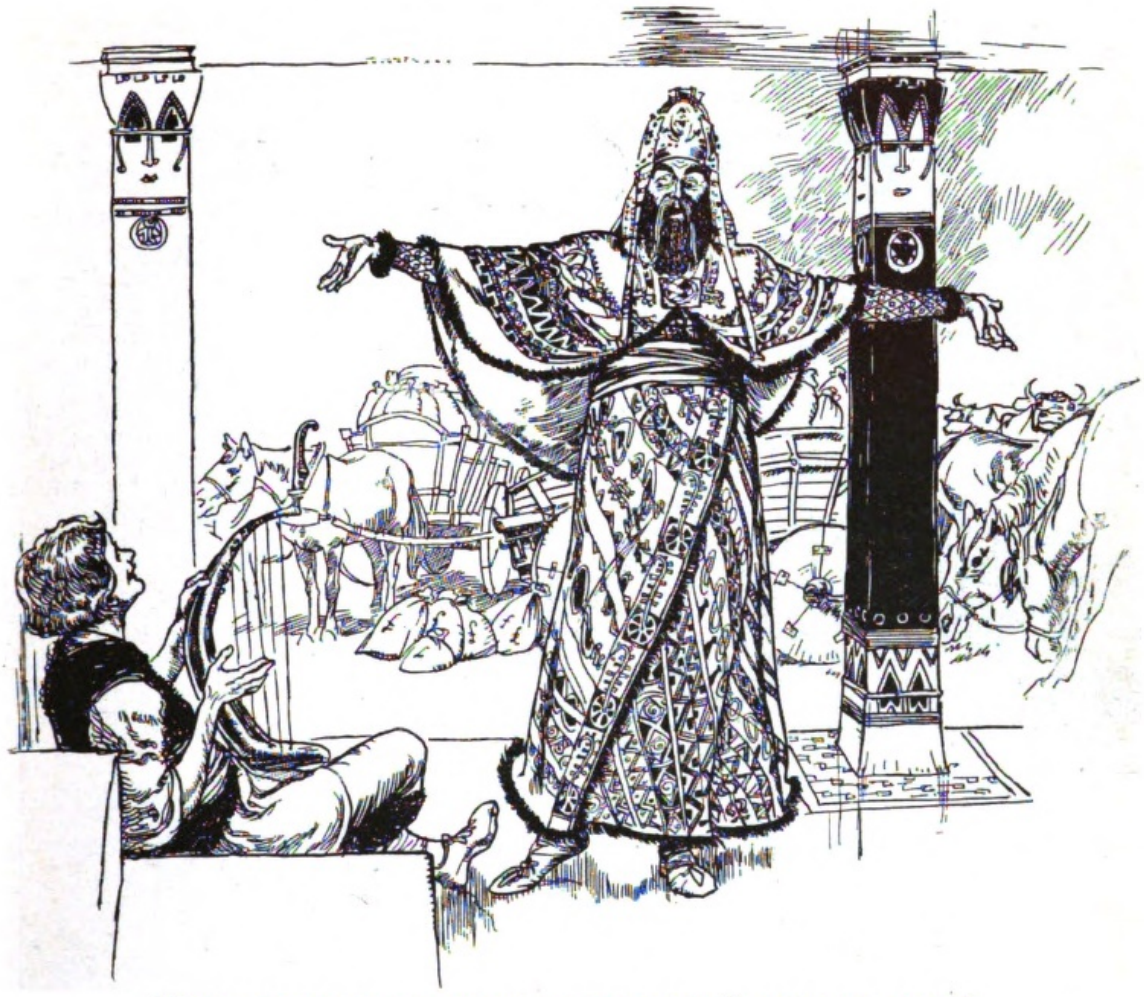
To Paradise, that is where I am bound,
As soon as this barrel turns round and round.

On the third day a man who had more money than he could count, but an uneasy conscience, heard the lad singing away so cheerily to himself. He paused by the barrel, then rapped on the head of it.

"How much money will you take to let me go to Paradise in your place?" he asked.

"That depends," said Peter. "It isn't

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"'BUT WHERE DID YOU GET ALL THESE RICHES?' ASKED THE KING."

everyone who has a chance of going straight to Paradise in spite of all the sins he may have committed. I ought to be well paid if I am to give up such an opportunity."

"And so you shall be," said the man, "for I will give you all the money I possess."

He sat down and made a deed of gift to Peter, so that at his death all his wealth would belong to the lad; then he let Peter out of the barrel and crept into it himself.

That day, to make sure the deed was done, the King himself went to the top of the mountain and rolled the barrel down the hill into the sea.

"There, Peter," he said, as the barrel fell with a splash into the water below. "There, Peter, I've got the better of you at last."

But when the King went back to the palace, what should he see but Peter sitting on the steps playing upon a harp. Before him stood waggons of money and long lines of horses and cattle.

"What! is that you, Peter?" he cried.

"Me it is," replied Peter. "I was just waiting to ask if I might store my riches in your palace until I can build a palace of my own—a palace, mind you, not a shanty."

"But where did you get all these riches?" asked the King.

"Well, you with your own hands rolled me into the sea, as you know. When I came to the bottom I found horses and cattle there without number, and gold lay about in heaps as big as houses. I took as much as I wanted, and here I am."

"What will you take to roll me the same way?" asked the King.

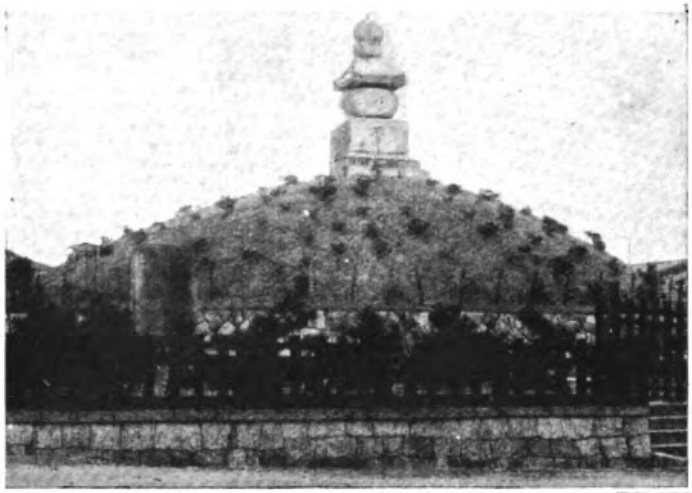
"Since I am so rich I have no need to take money, even from kings," said Peter, loftily. "I will do it as friend to friend."

So Peter put the King into a barrel and rolled him down the mountain into the sea; then he returned to the palace and told the people the King had bidden him rule the land in his absence. Thus Peter became King, and a very merry king he was. All day long he whistled and sang, and the song he sang most often of all was, "Hey-ho for the trickster!"

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# CURIOSITIES.

*[We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.]*



## A MOUND OF EARS AND NOSES.

ABOUT three hundred years ago Taiko Hideyoshi, the celebrated Japanese conqueror, invaded Korea. During many victorious fights so great a number of Koreans were slain that Taiko ordered his soldiers to bring home the ears and noses of the enemies instead of the more usual trophies of heads. Those trophies were interred beneath the mound here shown, which stands at the foot of a hill in Kyoto, Japan, on which Taiko himself lies buried.—Mr. Toji Inagaki, Miyajiri, Yamada, Ise, Japan.

## FISH WITH TWO MOUTHS.

HAVING seen in a recent issue of THE STRAND a photograph of a fish with three eyes, I thought that the accompanying picture, showing a roach with two mouths, would be equally interesting. Both mouths are properly formed, and the fish, which I caught in the River Adur, at Steyning, weighed a pound.—Mr. Sidney Gander, 9, Windsor Street, Brighton.



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## CURIOUS AFRICAN BEEHIVES.

HERE is a photograph which was taken in British East Africa, of an acacia tree, with native beehives suspended therefrom. These beehives are made from a hollowed log of wood, the ends being blocked up, and a small hole left on the underneath side, through which the bees go in and out. They are seen hanging in great numbers on trees miles from any signs of human habitation. The hives are marked, and woe betide the man who removes his neighbour's hive. In some parts of British East Africa the price of a wife is five well-established beehives and three goats. — Mr. G. M. Monkhouse, Mallow, Co. Cork.



## Bridge Problem.

BY VLADIMIR DE ROZING.

Hearts—7, 3, 2.
Diamonds—Ace, king, 10, 8, 3.
Clubs—Ace, knave, 10, 8.
Spades—2.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Hearts - King, queen, 9, 8.<br>Diamonds—Knave, 7, 5, 2.<br>Clubs—2.<br>Spades—Queen, 7, 6, 4. | A<br>Z Y<br>B | Hearts—5.<br>Diamonds—9.<br>Clubs—King, queen, 9, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3.<br>Spades—10, 9, 8. |

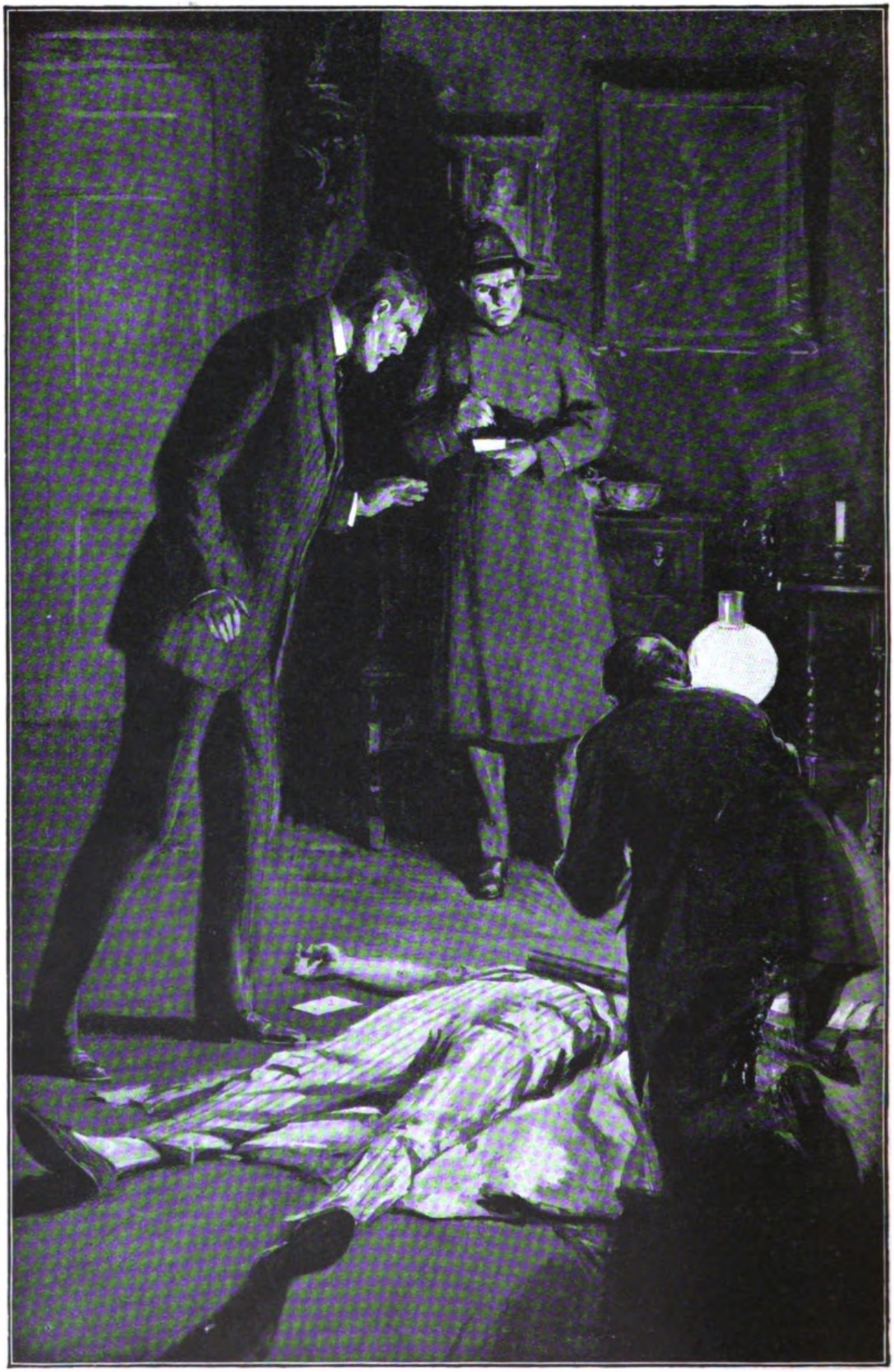
Hearts—Ace, knave, 10, 6, 4.
Diamonds—Queen, 6 4.
Spades—Ace, king, knave, 5, 3.

A declares diamonds. Y leads the queen of clubs. A and B are to make small slam against any possible defence.

*[The solution will be given next month.]*

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"THE DOCTOR KNELT BESIDE HIM, AND HELD DOWN THE HAND-LAMP. ONE GLANCE WAS ENOUGH TO SHOW THE HEALER THAT HIS PRESENCE COULD BE DISPENSED WITH."

(*See page 365.*)

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THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

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# The VALLEY of FEAR

## A NEW SHERLOCK HOLMES STORY

By

## A. CONAN DOYLE

*Illustrated by FRANK WILES*

PART ·I·

## THE TRAGEDY OF BIRLSTONE

The opening chapters of this new and thrilling adventure of Sherlock Holmes, which commenced in our last issue, described the receipt by Holmes of a cipher message, from which he deduces that some devilry is intended against a man named Douglas, a rich country gentleman living at Birlstone in Sussex, and that the danger is a pressing one. Almost as soon as he has deciphered the message he is visited by Inspector MacDonald, of Scotland Yard, who brings the news that Mr. Douglas has been murdered that morning. He asks Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson to accompany him to the scene of the crime, and the three go off together.

### CHAPTER III.

#### THE TRAGEDY OF BIRLSTONE.

AND now for a moment I will ask leave to remove my own insignificant personality and to describe events which occurred before we arrived upon the scene by the light of knowledge which came to us afterwards. Only in this way can I make the reader appreciate the people concerned and the strange setting in which their fate was cast.

The village of Birlstone is a small and very ancient cluster of half-timbered cottages on the northern border of the county of Sussex. For centuries it had remained unchanged, but within the last few years its picturesque appearance and situation have attracted a number of well-to-do residents, whose villas


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peep out from the woods around. These woods are locally supposed to be the extreme fringe of the great Weald forest, which thins away until it reaches the northern chalk downs. A number of small shops have come into being to meet the wants of the increased population, so that there seems some prospect that Birlstone may soon grow from an ancient village into a modern town. It is the centre for a considerable area of country, since Tunbridge Wells, the nearest place of importance, is ten or twelve miles to the eastward, over the borders of Kent.

About half a mile from the town, standing in an old park famous for its huge beech trees, is the ancient Manor House of Birlstone. Part of this venerable building dates back to the time of the first Crusade, when Hugo de Capus built a fortalice in the centre of the estate, which had been granted to him by the Red King. This was destroyed by fire in 1543, and some of its smoke-blackened corner-stones were used when, in Jacobean times, a brick country house rose upon the ruins of the feudal castle. The Manor House, with its many gables and its small, diamond-paned windows, was still much as the builder had left it in the early seventeenth century. Of the double moats which had guarded its more warlike predecessor the outer had been allowed to dry up, and served the humble function of a kitchen garden. The inner one was still there, and lay, forty feet in breadth, though now only a few feet in depth, round the whole house. A small stream fed it and continued beyond it, so that the sheet of water, though turbid, was never ditch-like or unhealthy. The ground-floor windows were within a foot of the surface of the water. The only approach to the house was over a drawbridge, the chains and windlass of which had long been rusted and broken. The latest tenants of the Manor House had, however, with characteristic energy, set this right, and the drawbridge was not only capable of being raised, but actually was raised every evening and lowered every morning. By thus renewing the custom of the old feudal days the Manor House was converted into an island during the night—a fact which had a very direct bearing upon the mystery which was soon to engage the attention of all England.

The house had been untenanted for some years, and was threatening to moulder into a picturesque decay when the Douglases took possession of it. This family consisted of only two individuals, John Douglas and his wife. Douglas was a remarkable man both in character and in person; in age he may have been about fifty, with a strong-jawed, rugged face, a grizzling moustache, peculiarly keen grey eyes, and a wiry, vigorous figure which had lost nothing of the strength and activity of youth. He was cheery and genial to all, but somewhat offhand in his manners, giving the impression that he had seen life in social strata on some far lower horizon than the county society of Sussex. Yet, though looked at with some curiosity and reserve by his more cultivated neighbours, he soon acquired a great popularity among the villagers, subscribing handsomely to all local objects, and attending their smoking concerts and other functions, where, having a remarkably rich tenor voice, he was always ready to oblige with an excellent song. He appeared to have plenty of money, which was said to have been gained in the Californian gold-fields, and it was clear from his own talk and that of his wife that he had spent a part of his life in America. The good impression which had been produced by his generosity and by his democratic manners was increased by a reputation gained for utter indifference to danger. Though a wretched rider, he turned out at every meet, and took the most amazing falls in his determination to hold his own with the best. When the vicarage caught fire he distinguished himself also by the fearlessness with which he re-entered the building to save property, after the local fire brigade had given it up as impossible. Thus it came about that John Douglas, of the Manor House, had within five years won himself quite a reputation in Birlstone.

His wife, too, was popular with those who had made her acquaintance, though, after the English fashion, the callers upon a stranger who settled in the county without introductions were few and far between. This mattered the less to her as she was retiring by disposition and very much absorbed, to all appearance, in her husband and her domestic duties. It was known that she was an English lady who had met Mr. Douglas in London, he being at that time a widower. She was a beautiful woman, tall, dark, and slender, some twenty years younger than her husband, a disparity which seemed in no wise to mar the contentment of their family life. It was remarked sometimes, however, by those who knew them best that the confidence between the two did not appear to be complete, since the wife was either very reticent about her husband's past life or else, as seemed more likely, was very imperfectly informed about it. It had also been noted and commented upon by a few observant

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people that there were signs sometimes of some nerve-strain upon the part of Mrs. Douglas, and that she would display acute uneasiness if her absent husband should ever be particularly late in his return. On a quiet countryside, where all gossip is welcome, this weakness of the lady of the Manor House did not pass without remark, and it bulked larger upon people's memory when the events arose which gave it a very special significance.

There was yet another individual whose residence under that roof was, it is true, only an intermittent one, but whose presence at the time of the strange happenings which will now be narrated brought his name prominently before the public. This was Cecil James Barker, of Hales Lodge, Hampstead. Cecil Barker's tall, loose-jointed figure was a familiar one in the main street of Birlstone village, for he was a frequent and welcome visitor at the Manor House. He was the more noticed as being the only friend of the past unknown life of Mr. Douglas who was ever seen in his new English surroundings. Barker was himself an undoubted Englishman, but by his remarks it was clear that he had first known Douglas in America, and had there lived on intimate terms with him. He appeared to be a man of considerable wealth, and was reputed to be a bachelor. In age he was rather younger than Douglas, forty-five at the most, a tall, straight, broad-chested fellow, with a clean-shaven prize-fighter face, thick, strong, black eyebrows, and a pair of masterful black eyes which might, even without the aid of his very capable hands, clear a way for him through a hostile crowd. He neither rode nor shot, but spent his days in wandering round the old village with his pipe in his mouth, or in driving with his host, or in his absence with his hostess, over the beautiful countryside. "An easy-going, free-handed gentleman," said Ames, the butler. "But, my word, I had rather not be the man that crossed him." He was cordial and intimate with Douglas, and he was no less friendly with his wife, a friendship which more than once seemed to cause some irritation to the husband, so that even the servants were able to perceive his annoyance. Such was the third person who was one of the family when the catastrophe occurred. As to the other denizens of the old building, it will suffice out of a large household to mention the prim, respectable, and capable Ames and Mrs. Allen, a buxom and cheerful person, who relieved the lady of some of her household cares. The other six servants in the house bear no relation to the events of the night of January 6th.

It was at eleven-forty-five that the first alarm reached the small local police-station in the charge of Sergeant Wilson, of the Sussex Constabulary. Mr. Cecil Barker, much excited, had rushed up to the door and pealed furiously upon the bell. A terrible tragedy had occurred at the Manor House, and Mr. John Douglas had been murdered. That was the breathless burden of his message. He had hurried back to the house, followed within a few minutes by the police-sergeant, who arrived at the scene of the crime a little past twelve o'clock, after taking prompt steps to warn the county authorities that something serious was afoot.

On reaching the Manor House the sergeant had found the drawbridge down, the windows lighted up, and the whole household in a state of wild confusion and alarm. The white-faced servants were huddling together in the hall, with the frightened butler wringing his hands in the doorway. Only Cecil Barker seemed to be master of himself and his emotions. He had opened the door which was nearest to the entrance, and had beckoned to the sergeant to follow him. At that moment there arrived Dr. Wood, a brisk and capable general practitioner from the village. The three men entered the fatal room together, while the horror-stricken butler followed at their heels, closing the door behind him to shut out the terrible scene from the maid-servants.

The dead man lay upon his back, sprawling with outstretched limbs in the centre of the room. He was clad only in a pink dressing-gown, which covered his night clothes. There were carpet slippers upon his bare feet. The doctor knelt beside him, and held down the hand-lamp which had stood on the table. One glance at the victim was enough to show the healer that his presence could be dispensed with. The man had been horribly injured. Lying across his chest was a curious weapon, a shot-gun with the barrel sawn off a foot in front of the triggers. It was clear that this had been fired at close range, and that he had received the whole charge in the face, blowing his head almost to pieces. The triggers had been wired together, so as to make the simultaneous discharge more destructive.

The country policeman was unnerved and troubled by the tremendous responsibility which had come so suddenly upon him.

"We will touch nothing until my superiors

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arrive," he said, in a hushed voice, staring in horror at the dreadful head.

"Nothing has been touched up to now," said Cecil Barker. "I'll answer for that. You see it all exactly as I found it."

"When was that?" The sergeant had drawn out his notebook.

"It was just half-past eleven. I had not begun to undress, and I was sitting by the fire in my bedroom, when I heard the report. It was not very loud—it seemed to be muffled. I rushed down. I don't suppose it was thirty seconds before I was in the room."

"Was the door open?"

"Yes, it was open. Poor Douglas was lying as you see him. His bedroom candle was burning on the table. It was I who lit the lamp some minutes afterwards."

"Did you see no one?"

"No. I heard Mrs. Douglas coming down the stair behind me, and I rushed out to prevent her from seeing this dreadful sight. Mrs. Allen, the housekeeper, came and took her away. Ames had arrived, and we ran back into the room once more."

"But surely I have heard that the drawbridge is kept up all night."

"Yes, it was up until I lowered it."

"Then how could any murderer have got away? It is out of the question. Mr. Douglas must have shot himself."

"That was our first idea. But see." Barker drew aside the curtain, and showed that the long, diamond-paned window was open to its full extent. "And look at this!" He held the lamp down and illuminated a smudge of blood like the mark of a boot-sole upon the wooden sill. "Someone has stood there in getting out."

"You mean that someone waded across the moat?"

"Exactly."

"Then, if you were in the room within half a minute of the crime, he must have been in the water at that very moment."

"I have not a doubt of it. I wish to Heaven that I had rushed to the window. But the curtain screened it, as you can see, and so it never occurred to me. Then I heard the step of Mrs. Douglas, and I could not let her enter the room. It would have been too horrible."

"Horrible enough!" said the doctor, looking at the shattered head and the terrible marks which surrounded it. "I've never seen such injuries since the Birlstone railway smash."

"But, I say," remarked the police-sergeant, whose slow, bucolic common sense was still pondering over the open window. "It's all very well your saying that a man escaped by wading this moat, but what I ask you is—how did he ever get into the house at all if the bridge was up?"

"Ah, that's the question," said Barker.

"At what o'clock was it raised?"

"It was nearly six o'clock," said Ames, the butler.

"I've heard," said the sergeant, "that it was usually raised at sunset. That would be nearer half-past four than six at this time of year."

"Mrs. Douglas had visitors to tea," said Ames. "I couldn't raise it until they went. Then I wound it up myself."

"Then it comes to this," said the sergeant. "If anyone came from outside—*if* they did—they must have got in across the bridge before six and been in hiding ever since, until Mr. Douglas came into the room after eleven."

"That is so. Mr. Douglas went round the house every night the last thing before he turned in to see that the lights were right. That brought him in here. The man was waiting, and shot him. Then he got away through the window and left his gun behind him. That's how I read it—for nothing else will fit the facts."

The sergeant picked up a card which lay beside the dead man upon the floor. The initials V. V., and under it the number 341, were rudely scrawled in ink upon it.

"What's this?" he asked, holding it up.

Barker looked at it with curiosity.

"I never noticed it before," he said. "The murderer must have left it behind him."

"V. V. 341. I can make no sense of that."

The sergeant kept turning it over in his big fingers.

"What's V. V.? Somebody's initials, maybe. What have you got there, Dr. Wood?"

It was a good-sized hammer which had been lying upon the rug in front of the fireplace—a substantial, workmanlike hammer. Cecil Barker pointed to a box of brass-headed nails upon the mantelpiece.

"Mr. Douglas was altering the pictures yesterday," he said. "I saw him myself, standing upon that chair and fixing the big picture above it. That accounts for the hammer."

"We'd best put it back on the rug where we found it," said the sergeant, scratching his puzzled head in his perplexity. "It will want the best brains in the force to get to the bottom of this thing. It will be a London job before it is finished." He raised the

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hand-lamp and walked slowly round the room. "Halloa!" he cried, excitedly, drawing the window curtain to one side. "What o'clock were those curtains drawn?"

"When the lamps were lit," said the butler. "It would be shortly after four."

"Someone has been hiding here, sure enough." He held down the light, and the marks of muddy boots were very visible in the corner. "I'm bound to say this bears out your theory, Mr. Barker. It looks as if the man got into the house after four, when the curtains were drawn, and before six, when the bridge was raised. He slipped into this room because it was the first that he saw. There was no other place where he could hide, so he popped in behind this curtain. That all seems clear enough. It is likely that his main idea was to burgle the house, but Mr. Douglas chanced to come upon him, so he murdered him and escaped."

"That's how I read it," said Barker. "But, I say, aren't we wasting precious time? Couldn't we start out and scour the country before the fellow gets away?"

The sergeant considered for a moment.

"There are no trains before six in the morning, so he can't get away by rail. If he goes by road with his legs all dripping, it's odds that someone will notice him. Anyhow, I can't leave here myself until I am relieved. But I think none of you should go until we see more clearly how we all stand."

The doctor had taken the lamp and was narrowly scrutinizing the body.

"What's this mark?" he asked. "Could this have any connection with the crime?"

The dead man's right arm was thrust out from his dressing-gown and exposed as high as the elbow. About half-way up the forearm was a curious brown design, a triangle inside a circle, standing out in vivid relief upon the lard-coloured skin.

"It's not tattooed," said the doctor, peering through his glasses. "I never saw anything like it. The man has been branded at some time, as they brand cattle. What is the meaning of this?"

"I don't profess to know the meaning of it," said Cecil Barker; "but I've seen the mark on Douglas any time this last ten years."

"And so have I," said the butler. "Many a time when the master has rolled up his sleeves I have noticed that very mark. I've often wondered what it could be."

"Then it has nothing to do with the crime, anyhow," said the sergeant. "But it's a rum thing all the same. Everything about this case is rum. Well, what is it now?"

The butler had given an exclamation of astonishment, and was pointing at the dead man's outstretched hand.

"They've taken his wedding-ring!" he gasped.

"What!"

"Yes, indeed! Master always wore his plain gold wedding-ring on the little finger of his left hand. That ring with the rough nugget on it was above it, and the twisted snake-ring on the third finger. There's the nugget and there's the snake, but the wedding-ring is gone."

"He's right," said Barker.

"Do you tell me," said the sergeant, "that the wedding-ring was *below* the other?"

"Always!"

"Then the murderer, or whoever it was, first took off this ring you call the nugget-ring, then the wedding-ring, and afterwards put the nugget-ring back again."

"That is so."

The worthy country policeman shook his head.

"Seems to me the sooner we get London on to this case the better," said he. "White Mason is a smart man. No local job has ever been too much for White Mason. It won't be long now before he is here to help us. But I expect we'll have to look to London before we are through. Anyhow, I'm not ashamed to say that it is a deal too thick for the likes of me."

## CHAPTER IV.

### DARKNESS.

AT three in the morning the chief Sussex detective, obeying the urgent call from Sergeant Wilson, of Birlstone, arrived from headquarters in a light dog-cart behind a breathless trotter. By the five-forty train in the morning he had sent his message to Scotland Yard, and he was at the Birlstone station at twelve o'clock to welcome us. Mr. White Mason was a quiet, comfortable-looking person, in a loose tweed suit, with a clean-shaven, ruddy face, a stoutish body, and powerful bandy legs adorned with gaiters, looking like a small farmer, a retired gamekeeper, or anything upon earth except a very favourable specimen of the provincial criminal officer.

"A real downright snorter, Mr. MacDonald," he kept repeating. "We'll have the pressmen down like flies when they understand it. I'm hoping we will get our work done before they get poking their noses into it and messing up all the trails. There

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has been nothing like this that I can remember. There are some bits that will come home to you, Mr. Holmes, or I am mistaken. And you also, Dr. Watson, for the medicos will have a word to say before we finish. Your room is at the Westville Arms. There's no other place, but I hear that it is clean and good. The man will carry your bags. This way, gentlemen, if *you* please."

He was a very bustling and genial person, this Sussex detective. In ten minutes we had all found our quarters. In ten more we were seated in the parlour of the inn and being treated to a rapid sketch of those events which have been outlined in the previous chapter. MacDonald made an occasional note, while Holmes sat absorbed with the expression of surprised and reverent admiration with which the botanist surveys the rare and precious bloom.

"Remarkable!" he said, when the story was unfolded. "Most remarkable! I can hardly recall any case where the features have been more peculiar."

"I thought you would say so, Mr. Holmes," said White Mason, in great delight. "We're well up with the times in Sussex. I've told you now how matters were, up to the time when I took over from Sergeant Wilson between three and four this morning. My word, I made the old mare go! But I need not have been in such a hurry as it turned out, for there was nothing immediate that I could do. Sergeant Wilson had all the facts. I checked them and considered them, and maybe added a few on my own."

"What were they?" asked Holmes, eagerly.

"Well, I first had the hammer examined. There was Dr. Wood there to help me. We found no signs of violence upon it. I was hoping that, if Mr. Douglas defended himself with the hammer, he might have left his mark upon the murderer before he dropped it on the mat. But there was no stain."

"That, of course, proves nothing at all," remarked Inspector MacDonald. "There has been many a hammer murder and no trace on the hammer."

"Quite so. It doesn't prove it wasn't used. But there might have been stains, and that would have helped us. As a matter of fact, there were none. Then I examined the gun. They were buck-shot cartridges, and, as Sergeant Wilson pointed out, the triggers were wired together so that if you pulled on the hinder one both barrels were discharged. Whoever fixed that up had made up his mind that he was going to take no chances of missing his man. The sawn gun was not more than two feet long; one could carry it easily under one's coat. There was no complete maker's name, but the printed letters 'PEN' were on the fluting between the barrels, and the rest of the name had been cut off by the saw."

"A big 'P' with a flourish above it—'E' and 'N' smaller?" asked Holmes.

"Exactly."

"Pennsylvania Small Arm Company—well-known American firm," said Holmes.

White Mason gazed at my friend as the little village practitioner looks at the Harley Street specialist who by a word can solve the difficulties that perplex him.

"That is very helpful, Mr. Holmes. No doubt you are right. Wonderful—wonderful! Do you carry the names of all the gunmakers in the world in your memory?"

Holmes dismissed the subject with a wave.

"No doubt it is an American shot-gun," White Mason continued. "I seem to have read that a sawed-off shot-gun is a weapon used in some parts of America. Apart from the name upon the barrel, the idea had occurred to me. There is some evidence, then, that this man who entered the house and killed its master was an American."

MacDonald shook his head. "Man, you are surely travelling over-fast," said he. "I have heard no evidence yet that any stranger was ever in the house at all."

"The open window, the blood on the sill, the queer card, the marks of boots in the corner, the gun."

"Nothing there that could not have been arranged. Mr. Douglas was an American, or had lived long in America. So had Mr. Barker. You don't need to import an American from outside in order to account for American doings."

"Ames, the butler——"

"What about him? Is he reliable?"

"Ten years with Sir Charles Chandos—as solid as a rock. He has been with Douglas ever since he took the Manor House five years ago. He has never seen a gun of this sort in the house."

"The gun was made to conceal. That's why the barrels were sawn. It would fit into any box. How could he swear there was no such gun in the house?"

"Well, anyhow, he had never seen one."

MacDonald shook his obstinate Scotch head. "I'm not convinced yet that there was ever anyone in the house," said he. "I'm asking you to conseedar"—his accent became more Aberdonian as he lost himself

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in his argument—"I'm asking you to conseedar what it involves if you suppose that this gun was ever brought into the house and that all these strange things were done by a person from outside. Oh, man, it's just inconceivable! It's clean against common sense. I put it to you, Mr. Holmes, judging it by what we have heard."

"Well, state your case, Mr. Mac," said Holmes, in his most judicial style.

"The man is not a burglar, supposing that he ever existed. The ring business and the card point to premeditated murder for some private reason. Very good. Here is a man who slips into a house with the deliberate intention of committing murder. He knows, if he knows anything, that he will have a deeficulty in making his escape, as the house is surrounded with water. What weapon would he choose? You would say the most silent in the world. Then he could hope, when the deed was done, to slip quickly from the window, to wade the moat, and to get away at his leisure. That's understandable. But is it understandable that he should go out of his way to bring with him the most noisy weapon he could select, knowing well that it will fetch every human being in the house to the spot as quick as they can run, and that it is all odds that he will be seen before he can get across the moat? Is that credible, Mr. Holmes?"



"HOLMES EXAMINED THE STONE LEDGE AND THE GRASS BORDER BEYOND IT."

"Well, you put the case strongly," my friend replied, thoughtfully. "It certainly needs a good deal of justification. May I ask, Mr. White Mason, whether you examined the farther side of the moat at once, to see if there were any signs of the man having climbed out from the water?"

"There were no signs, Mr. Holmes. But



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it is a stone ledge, and one could hardly expect them."

"No tracks or marks?"

"None."

"Ha! Would there be any objection, Mr. White Mason, to our going down to the house at once? There may possibly be some small point which might be suggestive."

"I was going to propose it, Mr. Holmes, but I thought it well to put you in touch with all the facts before we go. I suppose, if anything should strike you——" White Mason looked doubtfully at the amateur.

"I have worked with Mr. Holmes before," said Inspector MacDonald. "He plays the game."

"My own idea of the game, at any rate," said Holmes, with a smile. "I go into a case to help the ends of justice and the work of the police. If ever I have separated myself from the official force, it is because they have first separated themselves from me. I have no wish ever to score at their expense. At the same time, Mr. White Mason, I claim the right to work in my own way and give my results at my own time—complete, rather than in stages."

"I am sure we are honoured by your presence and to show you all we know," said White Mason, cordially. "Come along, Dr. Watson, and when the time comes we'll all hope for a place in your book."

We walked down the quaint village street with a row of pollarded elms on either side of it. Just beyond were two ancient stone pillars, weather-stained and lichen-blotched, bearing upon their summits a shapeless something which had once been the ramping lion of Capus of Birlstone. A short walk along the winding drive, with such sward and oaks around it as one only sees in rural England; then a sudden turn, and the long, low, Jacobean house of dingy, liver-coloured brick lay before us, with an old-fashioned garden of cut yews on either side of it. As we approached it there were the wooden drawbridge and the beautiful broad moat, as still and luminous as quicksilver in the cold winter sunshine. Three centuries had flowed past the old Manor House, centuries of births and of home-comings, of country dances and of the meetings of fox-hunters. Strange that now in its old age this dark business should have cast its shadow upon the venerable walls. And yet those strange peaked roofs and quaint overhung gables were a fitting covering to grim and terrible intrigue. As I looked at the deep-set windows and the long sweep of the dull-coloured, water-lapped front I felt that no more fitting scene could be set for such a tragedy.

"That's the window," said White Mason; "that one on the immediate right of the drawbridge. It's open just as it was found last night."

"It looks rather narrow for a man to pass."

"Well, it wasn't a fat man, anyhow. We don't need your deductions, Mr. Holmes, to tell us that. But you or I could squeeze through all right."

Holmes walked to the edge of the moat and looked across. Then he examined the stone ledge and the grass border beyond it.

"I've had a good look, Mr. Holmes," said White Mason. "There is nothing there; no sign that anyone has landed. But why should he leave any sign?"

"Exactly. Why should he? Is the water always turbid?"

"Generally about this colour. The stream brings down the clay."

"How deep is it?"

"About two feet at each side and three in the middle."

"So we can put aside all idea of the man having been drowned in crossing?"

"No; a child could not be drowned in it."

We walked across the drawbridge, and were admitted by a quaint, gnarled, dried-up person who was the butler—Ames. The poor old fellow was white and quivering from the shock. The village sergeant, a tall, formal, melancholy man, still held his vigil in the room of fate. The doctor had departed.

"Anything fresh, Sergeant Wilson?" asked White Mason.

"No, sir."

"Then you can go home. You've had enough. We can send for you if we want you. The butler had better wait outside. Tell him to warn Mr. Cecil Barker, Mrs. Douglas, and the housekeeper that we may want a word with them presently. Now, gentlemen, perhaps you will allow me to give you the views I have formed first, and then you will be able to arrive at your own."

He impressed me, this country specialist. He had a solid grip of fact and a cool, clear, common-sense brain, which should take him some way in his profession. Holmes listened to him intently, with no sign of that impatience which the official exponent too often produced.

"Is it suicide or is it murder—that's our first question, gentlemen, is it not? If it were suicide, then we have to believe that this man began by taking off his wedding-ring and concealing it; that he then came

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down here in his dressing-gown, trampled mud into a corner behind the curtain in order to give the idea someone had waited for him, opened the window, put blood on the——"

"We can surely dismiss that," said MacDonald.

"So I think. Suicide is out of the question. Then a murder has been done. What we have to determine is whether it was done by someone outside or inside the house."

"Well, let's hear the argument."

"There are considerable difficulties both ways, and yet one or the other it must be. We will suppose first that some person or persons inside the house did the crime. They got this man down here at a time when everything was still, and yet no one was asleep. They then did the deed with the queerest and noisiest weapon in the world, so as to tell everyone what had happened—a weapon that was never seen in the house before. That does not seem a very likely start, does it?"

"No, it does not."

"Well, then, everyone is agreed that after the alarm was given only a minute at the most had passed before the whole household—not Mr. Cecil Barker alone, though he claims to have been the first, but Ames and all of them—were on the spot. Do you tell me that in that time the guilty person managed to make footmarks in the corner, open the window, mark the sill with blood, take the wedding-ring off the dead man's finger, and all the rest of it? It's impossible!"

"You put it very clearly," said Holmes. "I am inclined to agree with you."

"Well, then, we are driven back to the theory that it was done by someone from outside. We are still faced with some big difficulties, but, anyhow, they have ceased to be impossibilities. The man got into the house between four-thirty and six—that is to say, between dusk and the time when the bridge was raised. There had been some visitors, and the door was open, so there was nothing to prevent him. He may have been a common burglar, or he may have had some private grudge against Mr. Douglas. Since Mr. Douglas has spent most of his life in America, and this shot-gun seems to be an American weapon, it would seem that the private grudge is the more likely theory. He slipped into this room because it was the first he came to, and he hid behind the curtain. There he remained until past eleven at night. At that time Mr. Douglas entered the room. It was a short interview, if there were any interview at all, for Mrs. Douglas declares that her husband had not left her more than a few minutes when she heard the shot."

"The candle shows that," said Holmes.

"Exactly. The candle, which was a new one, is not burned more than half an inch. He must have placed it on the table before he was attacked, otherwise, of course, it would have fallen when he fell. This shows that he was not attacked the instant that he entered the room. When Mr. Barker arrived the lamp was lit and the candle put out."

"That's all clear enough."

"Well, now, we can reconstruct things on those lines. Mr. Douglas enters the room. He puts down the candle. A man appears from behind the curtain. He is armed with this gun. He demands the wedding-ring—Heaven only knows why, but so it must have been. Mr. Douglas gave it up. Then either in cold blood or in the course of a struggle—Douglas may have gripped the hammer that was found upon the mat—he shot Douglas in this horrible way. He dropped his gun and also, it would seem, this queer card, 'V. V. 341,' whatever that may mean, and he made his escape through the window and across the moat at the very moment when Cecil Barker was discovering the crime. How's that, Mr. Holmes?"

"Very interesting, but just a little unconvincing."

"Man, it would be absolute nonsense if it wasn't that anything else is even worse," cried MacDonald. "Somebody killed the man, and whoever it was I could clearly prove to you that he should have done it some other way. What does he mean by allowing his retreat to be cut off like that? What does he mean by using a shot-gun when silence was his one chance of escape? Come, Mr. Holmes, it's up to you to give us a lead, since you say Mr. White Mason's theory is unconvincing."

Holmes had sat intently observant during this long discussion, missing no word that was said, with his keen eyes darting to right and to left, and his forehead wrinkled with speculation.

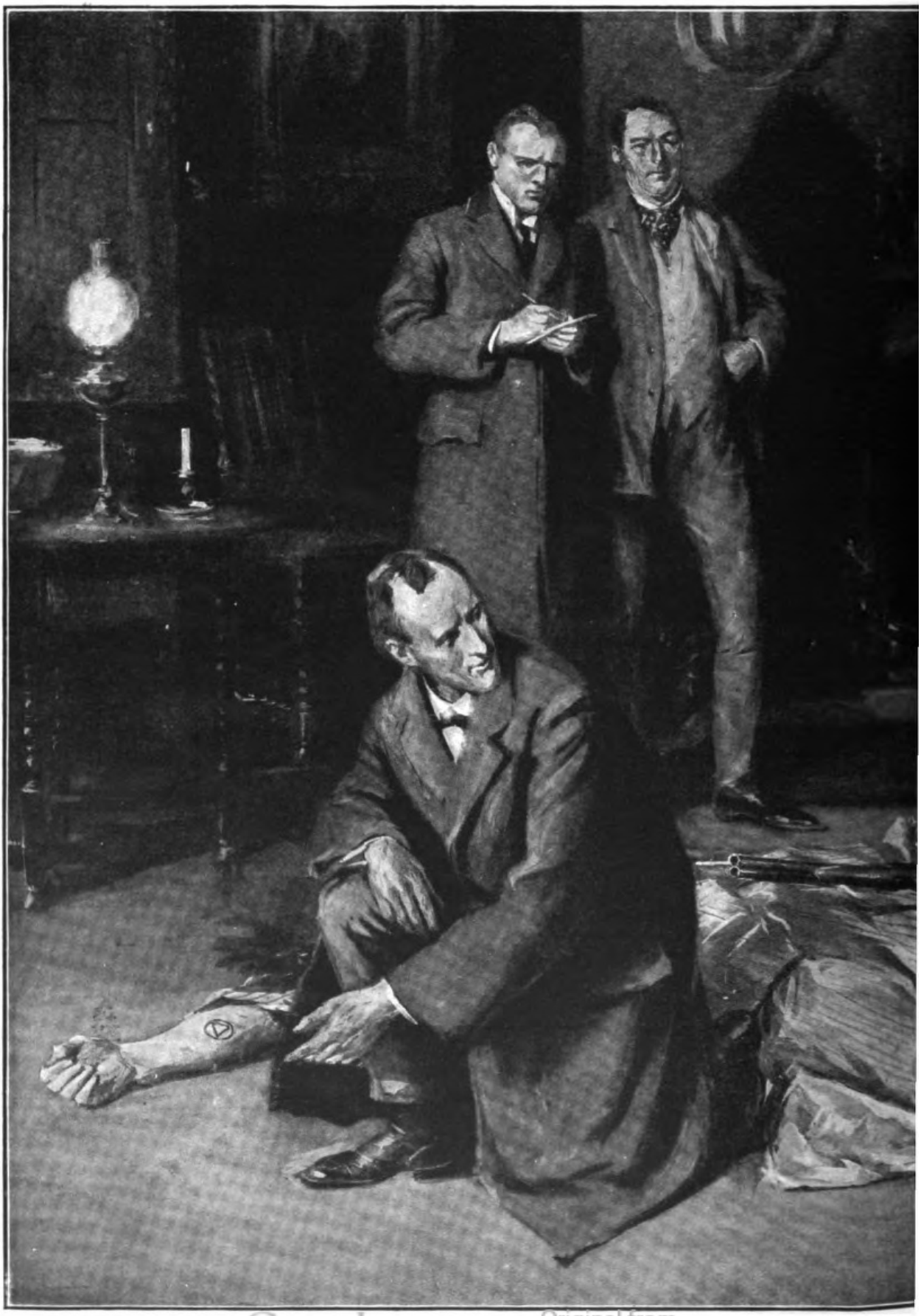
"I should like a few more facts before I get so far as a theory, Mr. Mac," said he, kneeling down beside the body. "Dear me! these injuries are really appalling. Can we have the butler in for a moment? . . . Ames, I understand that you have often seen this very unusual mark, a branded triangle inside a circle, upon Mr. Douglas's forearm?"

"Frequently, sir."

"You never heard any speculation as to what it meant?"

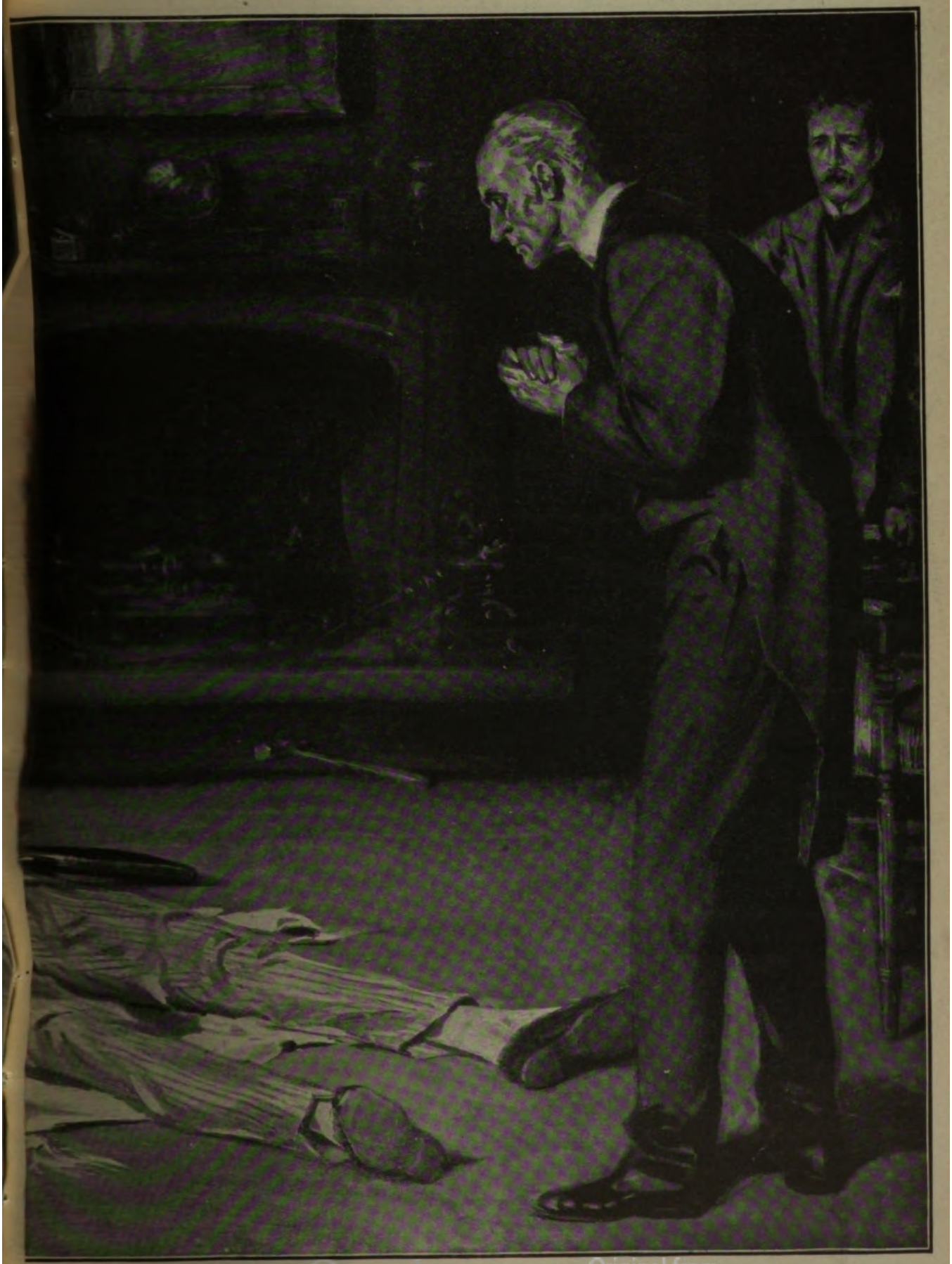
"No, sir."

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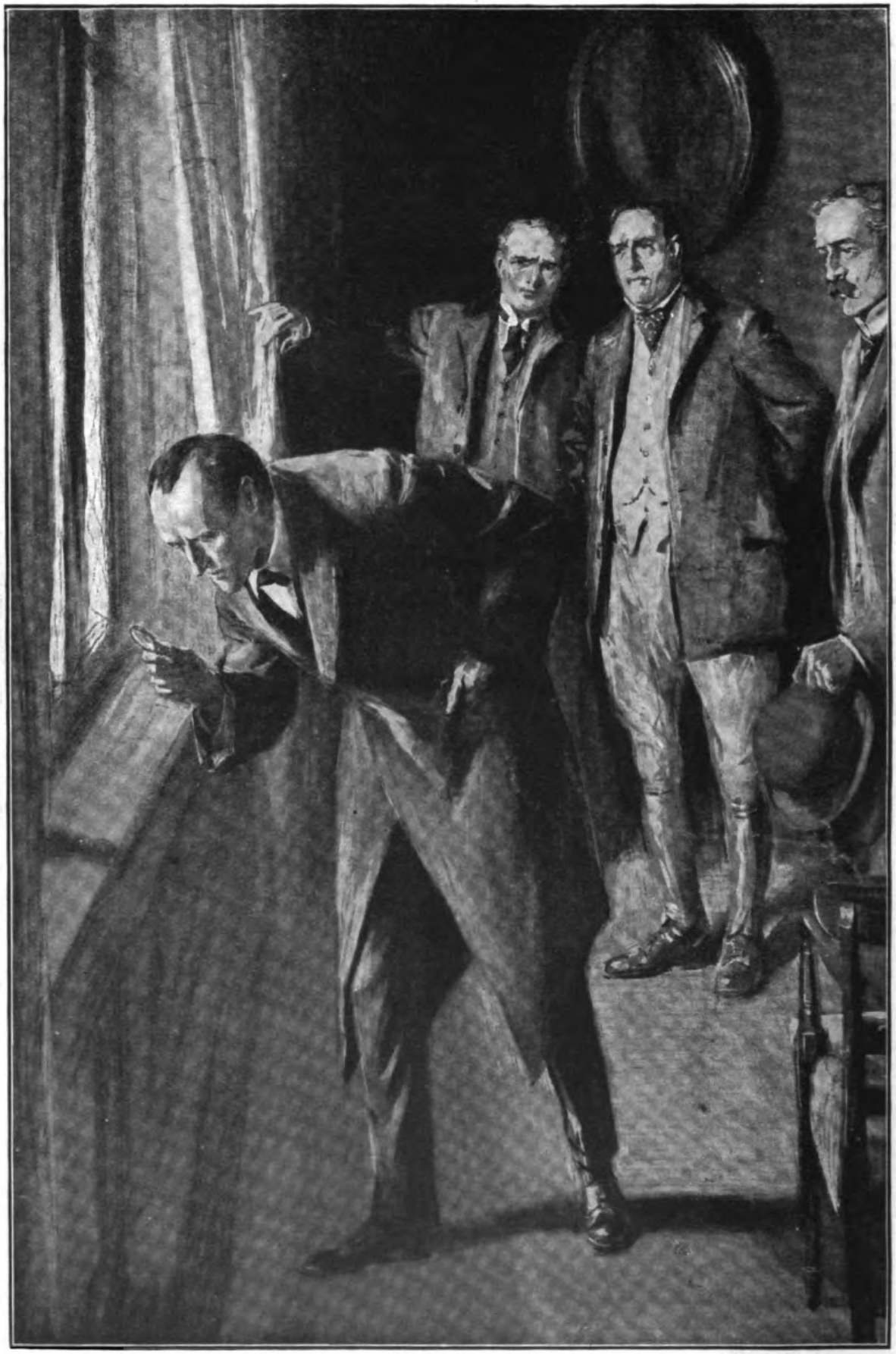
"AMES, I UNDERSTAND THAT YOU HAVE OFTEN SEEN THIS VERY UNUSUAL

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MARK, A BRANDED TRIANGLE INSIDE A CIRCLE, UPON MR. DOUGLAS'S FOREARM?"

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"HOLMES HAD GONE TO THE WINDOW AND WAS EXAMINING WITH HIS LENS THE BLOOD-MARK UPON THE SILL."

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"It must have caused great pain when it was inflicted. It is undoubtedly a burn. Now, I observe, Ames, that there is a small piece of plaster at the angle of Mr. Douglas's jaw. Did you observe that in life?"

"Yes, sir; he cut himself in shaving yesterday morning."

"Did you ever know him cut himself in shaving before?"

"Not for a very long time, sir."

"Suggestive!" said Holmes. "It may, of course, be a mere coincidence, or it may point to some nervousness which would indicate that he had reason to apprehend danger. Had you noticed anything unusual in his conduct yesterday, Ames?"

"It struck me that he was a little restless and excited, sir."

"Ha! The attack may not have been entirely unexpected. We do seem to make a little progress, do we not? Perhaps you would rather do the questioning, Mr. Mac?"

"No, Mr. Holmes; it's in better hands."

"Well, then, we will pass to this card—'V. V. 341.' It is rough cardboard. Have you any of the sort in the house?"

"I don't think so."

Holmes walked across to the desk and dabbed a little ink from each bottle on to the blotting-paper. "It has not been printed in this room," he said; "this is black ink, and the other purplish. It has been done by a thick pen, and these are fine. No, it has been done elsewhere, I should say. Can you make anything of the inscription, Ames?"

"No, sir, nothing."

"What do you think, Mr. Mac?"

"It gives me the impression of a secret society of some sort. The same with this badge upon the forearm."

"That's my idea, too," said White Mason.

"Well, we can adopt it as a working hypothesis, and then see how far our difficulties disappear. An agent from such a society makes his way into the house, waits for Mr. Douglas, blows his head nearly off with this weapon, and escapes by wading the moat, after leaving a card beside the dead man which will, when mentioned in the papers, tell other members of the society that vengeance has been done. That all hangs together. But why this gun, of all weapons?"

"Exactly."

"And why the missing ring?"

"Quite so."

"And why no arrest? It's past two now. I take it for granted that since dawn every constable within forty miles has been looking out for a wet stranger?"

"That is so, Mr. Holmes."

"Well, unless he has a burrow close by, or a change of clothes ready, they can hardly miss him. And yet they *have* missed him up to now." Holmes had gone to the window and was examining with his lens the blood-mark upon the sill. "It is clearly the tread of a shoe. It is remarkably broad—a splay foot, one would say. Curious, because, so far as one can trace any footmark in this mud-stained corner, one would say it was a more shapely sole. However, they are certainly very indistinct. What's this under the side-table?"

"Mr. Douglas's dumb-bells," said Ames.

"Dumb-bell—there's only one. Where's the other?"

"I don't know, Mr. Holmes. There may have been only one. I have not noticed them for months."

"One dumb-bell——" Holmes said, seriously, but his remarks were interrupted by a sharp knock at the door. A tall, sunburned, capable-looking, clean-shaven man looked in at us. I had no difficulty in guessing that it was the Cecil Barker of whom I had heard. His masterful eyes travelled quickly with a questioning glance from face to face.

"Sorry to interrupt your consultation," said he, "but you should hear the latest."

"An arrest?"

"No such luck. But they've found his bicycle. The fellow left his bicycle behind him. Come and have a look. It is within a hundred yards of the hall door."

We found three or four grooms and idlers standing in the drive inspecting a bicycle which had been drawn out from a clump of evergreens in which it had been concealed. It was a well-used Rudge-Whitworth, splashed as from a considerable journey. There was a saddle-bag with spanner and oil-can, but no clue as to the owner.

"It would be a grand help to the police," said the inspector, "if these things were numbered and registered. But we must be thankful for what we've got. If we can't find where he went to, at least we are likely to get where he came from. But what in the name of all that is wonderful made the fellow leave it behind? And how in the world has he got away without it? We don't seem to get a gleam of light in the case, Mr. Holmes."

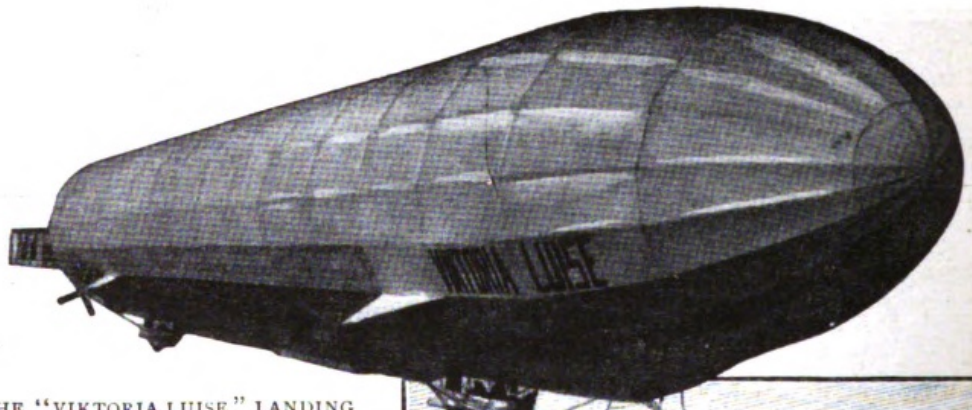
"Don't we?" my friend answered, thoughtfully. "I wonder!"

*(To be continued.)*

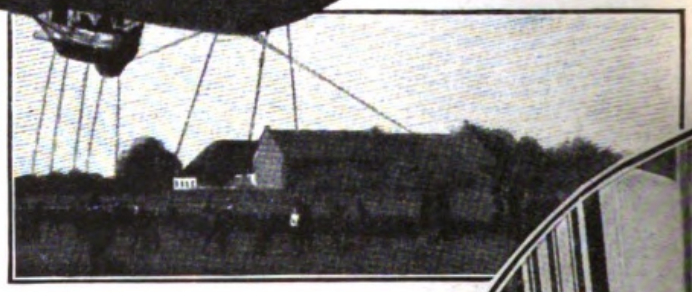
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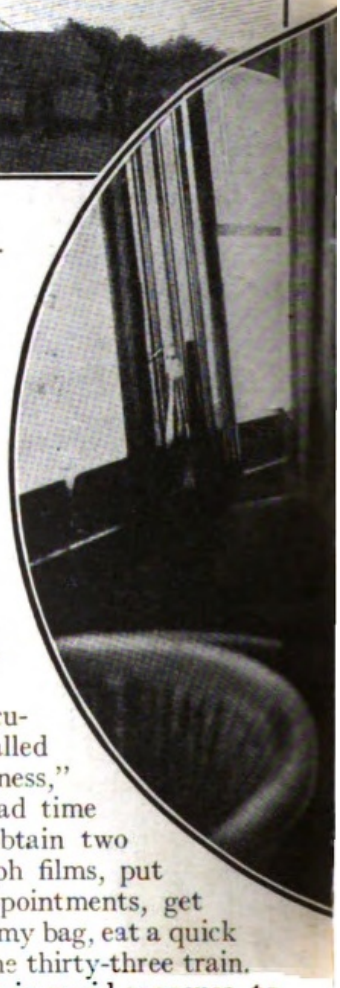
# A GIRL'S FLIGHT

By HANNA




THE "VIKTORIA LUISE" LANDING AFTER THE VOYAGE DESCRIBED IN THE ACCOMPANYING ARTICLE.





TWICE had I been cheated out of seeing a Zeppelin passing directly over my hotel—the first time, last winter, a young woman's singing in my room drowned the warning roar; the second time was only yesterday morning, as I lay in my bed in Freiburg absorbed in reading Chesterton's "Flying Inn."

I felt a curious personal affront on afterwards hearing of my loss, even though I held the peculiar distinction of being the only person in Freiburg who had missed the sight.

Twice had a Zeppelin eluded me; the thing assumed the features of a flirtation; the monster seemed to say, tauntingly, "If you would see me, you must pursue me to my lair."

"So I will, then," said I, and forthwith rose and donned my clothes, and at 10 a.m. went to see a very intelligent German who has been my last resort for information on all points ever since my residence in Freiburg. Here was a fateful coincidence—one of those heavenly, freakish things which we always expect to happen in well-regulated books but never in real life: it developed that my man was none other than the Freiburg agent of the Zeppelins of both Baden-Baden and Frankfort. I had been deliberately guided to him!

Within an hour, after some long-distance telephoning, he was able to give me exact answers to every question I fired at him.

The Zeppelin would not fly from Baden-Oos for possibly six weeks. The Zeppelin would go up at Frankfort the following day, number of passengers and weather permitting.

Train for Frankfort left Freiburg at 1.33 p.m., arriving at Frankfort at 5.55 p.m.

I immediately calculated with what he called "American-do-it-quickness," and I found I just had time to take a taxi and obtain two extra rolls of photograph films, put off several business appointments, get back to my hotel, pack my bag, eat a quick lunch, and catch the one thirty-three train.

I did all these things in rapid sequence, to the astonishment of the conservative German hotel officials, and slightly to my own, and at one-forty I was sitting in the railway-carriage catching my breath as the train sped towards

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# IN A ZEPPELIN.

## RION VER BECK.

Frankfort and the elusive Zeppelin. Of the trip of four and a half hours I shall only tell you one thing: at Heidelberg a nice fat Ohio man and his thin wife got into my carriage, and, as my husband (and all other great Americans) comes from Ohio, I warmed up to the stranger at once and confided to him that I was going to Frankfort to fly.

He looked me over in his nice, plump, fatherly way, and said, slowly:—

"I wouldn't if I were you. They couldn't get me to go up in one of those ill-fated Zeppelins if they offered me my weight in gold."

I remembered that remark in the middle of the night.

Arrived in Frankfort I took the tram to the office of the Zeppelin. As we were going down the Kaiserstrasse I noticed everyone in the street looking upward, and I looked too. Lo and behold! there was the flirtsome Zeppelin directly over my head—come out to meet me half-way.



THE AUTHOR IN THE PASSENGER CABIN OF THE AIRSHIP.

*Photo. by Wilcke, Friedrichshafen.*

There are some sights which the brain does not accept when the eye reports them—this sight was pre-eminently one of them. My eyes saw a gigantic silver cigar gliding high over the roofs of Frankfort, but I didn't believe my eyes—it was unbelievable.

It was the most appalling sight I had ever disbelieved.

If there had not seemed to be a power—a Something stronger than I pushing me from behind, I should never then have carried out my intention of the morning. But I was a helpless manikin in the grip of a giant hand too strong to struggle against, and on I was pushed to the office, where I lied and said I *wanted* to book a passage in the Zeppelin for the next day's flight.

The booking took as long and seemed as full of formality and red-tapish detail as the taking out of a marriage licence.

When the blond young booking-clerk with the cold, cold eye asked me my husband's address (present residence), I said: "But why?"

He gazed upon me with his turtle eye and said: "Why? Why, just in case—that is—it is merely a formality and the custom of the company. Your husband's address is——?"

That suddenly arrested and cut short "in case" had explained it all; the necessary precaution the company must take of obtaining full and correct address of nearest relative, so that telegrams of certain notification shall go as direct as possible.

"Yes," said I. "You are right, 'in case.' Well, the address is——" and I gave it without further hesitation.

When I found that the price of a ticket was only one hundred marks I was really overwhelmed. It seemed so frightfully good and generous of the company to give one so much danger for only five pounds.

At last all the formalities were over, the ticket was in my hand, and I was doomed to fly at five o'clock the next afternoon, June the eighteenth.

When I got to my hotel I sat down and wondered why on earth I was doing this thing—a thing I had not dreamed of twenty-four hours before. There was no answer within me. I do things because I *must*. Life is a procession of things which present themselves to be done, and I do them—not willingly—but I do them.

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Mark Twain and Albert Bigelow Paine put the blame of all such things on the "first thought of the first atom," which decided all the action and thought of every human being throughout life. Others comprehendingly call the thing "Fate." I call it "The Something"—that slave-driver which pushes me willy-nilly through life and forces me every day to do the things which my cowardice, laziness, and discretion make me desire not to do.

I was never more helplessly in the grip of "The Something," for—I put my mouth to your ear—I did not want to go up in that Zeppelin!

But I did not even dare whisper that truth to myself at all during my waking hours yesterday, and I went to bed and to sleep, firmly saying, in a sort of bravado to myself, "How glad I am to go!"

At half-past one in the night I woke suddenly and found myself in a deadly funk about *something*.

After getting my senses marshalled I discovered why I was dripping with a cold perspiration. Waking from sleep I had suddenly eluded the grip of "The Something," and I realized with clear sanity and independence of thought what I was going to do. Again I seemed to hear that nice, comfy voice from Ohio saying: "I wouldn't go up in one of those ill-fated Zeppelins, not if you gave me my weight in gold."

When he had said that twelve hours earlier I had merely smiled in a superior manner and looked at him with the expression the young reserve for the old.

I now listened with no smile of superiority or inferiority; I listened grimly as to the voice of a sage.

Before my inner eye flashed remembered head-lines on the first pages of newspapers—they were the obituary notes of *Zeppelin I.*, *Zeppelin II.*, and several other members of that ill-fated family.

Then I suddenly sat up in bed, and I laughed aloud—the sort of laugh that one hears filter through the windows of sanatoriums.

But when I arose in the morning I was in The Grip again, and I was filled with the same emotionless calm of the day before.

I looked out of the window hoping, from the mere force of habit, for good weather; the sky was overcast; that did not add to my happiness, for should it storm there would only be a postponement—there was no ultimate respite for me. I was a pawn that had been pushed over the chess-board of Germany from Freiburg to Frankfort, and the next move would be from Frankfort up into the air.




"I ENTERED THE GARAGE AND LIFTED MY EYES TO THE THAT SEEMED SO OVER-

At ten minutes to one the sun came out; the weather became unmercifully beautiful.

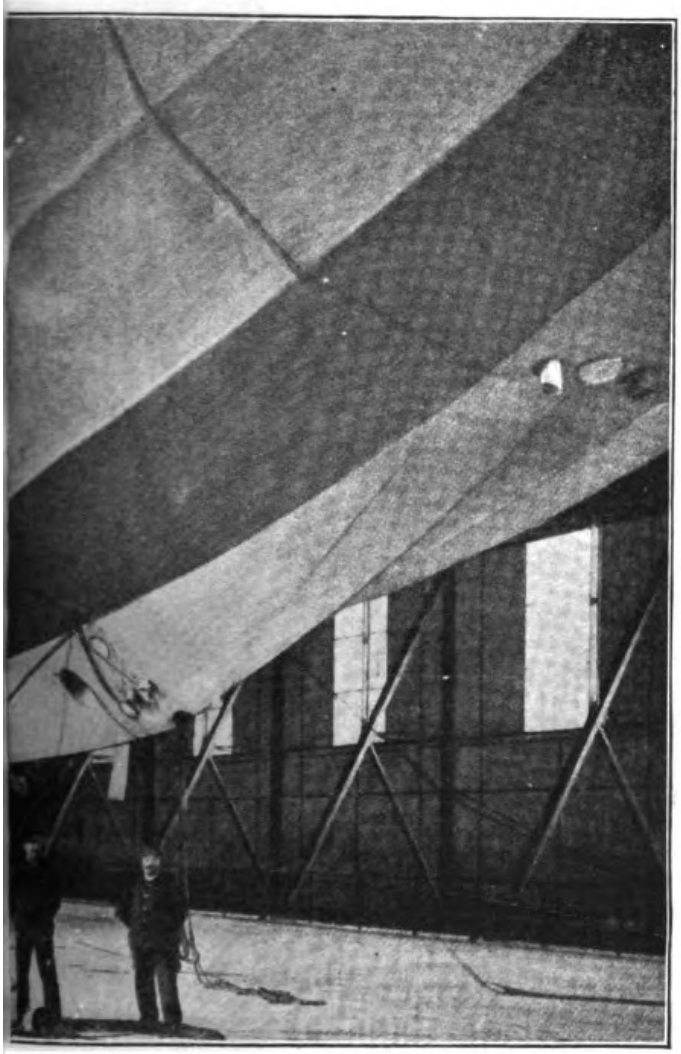
To-day was the longest day of my life.

I eased my conscience by writing hurried, affectionate letters of confession to my family in England and America just "in case," you know—just in case.

Then I descended to the hotel office and ordered a taxi. As I was going out of the door, at the last moment, I was seized with a sudden inspiration of generosity, and I had my hand already stretched forth offering to give my Zeppelin ticket to the hotel bell-boy, but the inspiration died within me because—well, he looked such a nice child and probably his mother was a widow.

I wished the *portier* had not insisted upon

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TAUNTING MONSTER. NEVER HAVE I SEEN ANYTHING WHELMING AT CLOSE RANGE."

shaking hands with me when he said good-bye at the door of the taxi. It was in bad taste and unnecessarily final.

I arrived at the outskirts of the city and the gigantic Luftschiffhalle (garage) at four-forty-five.

I entered the garage with thumping of heart, and lifted my eyes to the taunting monster. Never have I seen anything that seemed so overwhelming at close range. It looked larger than the *Imperator* to me.

I felt the size of a molecule, and I wanted somebody's shoulder to shed my molecular tears upon. I looked about for the shoulder; there were plenty for choice, both masculine and feminine, but they did not look inviting. I was, however, cheered by the fact that I was evidently to have much company in my flight, for at all the small tables along the inner edge of the shed were seated people drinking beer, tea, and wine, just for all the world as they might on any ordinary occasion.

I walked the length of the airship. It took just two hundred and fifty-six steps, and the time consumed was two and a half minutes. I was afterwards told by the first mate that the *Viktoria Luise* is one hundred and fifty metres long. It looks a mile.

There lay on the cement floor beside the ship a most tremendous writhing bladder, whose sides heaved as in breathing.

There were men inside, walking about it, lifting its panting sides here and there.

I was told that something had gone wrong with one of the balloon bladders, and it had had to be taken out and replaced by another. It would delay us perhaps an hour.

Reared up alongside the ship was a sort of fireman's ladder up which men ran like squirrels to the top of the ship and then leapt to a trapeze arrangement suspended from the ceiling of the shed, from which they proceeded to do mysterious things to the inside of the top of the *Viktoria Luise*.

Great serpent hose were attached to the ship from the bottom, through which the gas was being pumped into her huge lungs.

Word had evidently been sent out from the main office that I was to be given every opportunity for investigation of the ship, for the *Führer* of the *Viktoria Luise*, Dr. Eberhard Lempertz, came over to me, clicked his heels together, made a low bow, opened the closed-to-others-gate leading to the private inner sanctum of the Luftschiffhalle, and begged me to enter. In very good English he said that the first officer would take great pleasure in showing me over the ship and in giving me any information desired.

The first mate was then presented, with great formality and a profound bow, and Dr. Lempertz retired. The first mate spoke perfect English, having had years of experience as officer on several transatlantic steamers.

First we mounted the ladder to the rear aluminium basket, in which are two motors of one hundred and fifty horse-power each. Here is also an emergency steering apparatus, to be used in case the fore one on the captain's bridge becomes impaired.

There is a most perfect system of telegraphic communication between the captain's compartment and the rear.

There is also a trolly-line extending between the two baskets, having on it a small aluminium egg; in case the propellers are not working properly, and the captain wishes to give detailed directions to the men in the rear compartment, he can write his orders on

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a slip of paper and place this in the egg; then, by the touch of a lever, the note is shot along the trolly to the rear.

One can walk inside the under-ribs of the ship from one end to the other. I was taken along this curious passage, which, though without windows, is luminous with light which comes through the white linen and silk outer covering.

The sides of this long, aluminium-ribbed passage rise at a sharp angle, leaving just sufficient width at the bottom for the foot-path.

Near the passenger-cabin we came to a great funnel opening to the very top of the ship, through which one could see far above the roof of the shed.

"What is that for?" I asked.

"It is in case of war. The guns are to be mounted on the top of this funnel."

Then he drew my attention to vacant niches on either side of the inner aluminium ribs, and I saw large hooks on which nothing hung.

"There are to be placed the bombs—twelve in all—each weighing six hundred kilos. They can be dropped through here"—saying which he showed me the detachable under-strip of silk-linen immediately beneath the as yet empty bomb-hooks.

"May I take a photograph of this passage?" I asked, getting my camera ready.

"So sorry," said he, "but it cannot be permitted. You see, you are on board a battleship as well as a passenger Zeppelin; I am really showing you the secrets—so to speak—of the fort."

I put my camera away, apologized, and expressed my appreciation of the privilege of seeing.

Then we proceeded to the passenger-cabin.

It is perfectly charming. It must have been planned by an artist and a sage, for it gives one the instant sense of safety and gaiety. The colour-scheme is a strange, inharmonious harmony of old rose and crimson. It is as wide as a railway-coach and has comfortably-cushioned red wicker chairs placed along its wide windows.

On the outside of one of its red doors is a lavatory with every modern convenience except a bath; on the outer side of the other door is located the buffet, with its stock of wines and cold delicacies. From here we proceeded down the long interior aluminium-ribbed alley to the captain's compartment-basket. Here is the steering-gear proper, the compass, the barometer, the apparatus which registers the altitude, the aluminium signal flags, the telegraph switchboard, a large motor, and many levers.

There are located at several parts of the ship three ballast-bags of water, each weighing about fourteen hundred English pounds. By touching levers in the captain's basket, any one of these bags can be opened instantly and the water let out to lighten the ship to the degree desired.

The outer covering of the entire balloon section is made of a mixed material of silk and linen, and at every eighth metre there is a band of aluminium extending around the sides like the rungs of a barrel—these are the ribs of the ship.

There are eighteen separate balloons, duplicates of the writhing bladder on the floor, each balloon holding twelve thousand cubic metres of gas.

The usual height maintained for passenger service is about six hundred to seven hundred and fifty feet (this is to enable the passengers to see more clearly the details of earth), but the *Viktoria Luise* has flown to an altitude of from two thousand five hundred to six thousand feet.

The revolutions of the motors are twelve hundred per minute, those of the propellers from four hundred and fifty to five hundred per minute.

The average speed of the ship for passenger service is from forty to fifty miles an hour.

I had now been shown every part of the ship except the inside of the gas-bags and the top, and all my questions had been answered, so I descended the ladder from the captain's bridge with a feeling of having seen all the teeth of the monster and having no longer any fear of their bite.

Really a thorough investigation of this most extraordinary invention of a giant brain gives one a feeling that there is only one chance out of a thousand for accident; every emergency possible has been thought of and met as far as human forethought could meet it.

I now returned to the public outer space of the garage.

The time of departure was arriving; already those gigantic doors were being opened by hand-power, eight men to a door, turning cranks with their bodies bent double.

The ship's anchors, attached by cables, were hooked under the rails of two steel tracks extending the length of the shed and out into the field for a space of perhaps seventy-five feet.

They were now trying the motors, the propellers whirling with deafening thunder.

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I studied the faces of my supposed fellow-passengers with what in my vanity I considered penetration. They all returned my gaze with preternatural solemnity.

"Yes," thought I, "poor things, you don't want to go up any more than I do. You too are driven to it by the 'Something,' and any of you would be glad to give your ticket to your best enemy this very moment."

I heard some words spoken in American by a carelessly-dressed, good-natured-looking man of sixty.

I went up to him and said: "You're a fellow-countryman of mine. I'm glad you are going up."

"But I'm not," said he. "I only came to see you go."

"Oh! I'm so sorry," I gasped, feeling a sudden loneliness.

"You're not scared?" he asked.

"No, of course not," I replied, in the voice of a mouse; "but—well, I just wish *you* were going."

Then we talked of the ship, and I asked him if it didn't make him think of a giant cigar.

"Yes," he said; "about the size cigar 'Mark' would have liked to smoke."

When I heard him speak of Mr. Clemens thus affectionately as "Mark" I guessed where he was from.

"Mississippi River?" I asked.

"Yes," said he; "and you are a South Carolinian. Keep your Southern pluck up, honey," he begged. "I don't reckon it's going to be as scary as it looks."

I shook hands with him then and felt a world of courage flow from his big hand into mine. Just then the waiter of the Zeppelin approached and singled me out, saying, "Will you please to come now and get in?"

I started, expecting all the others, excepting my Southern friend, to follow; but no one stirred.

I then turned around and, facing all those thirty-eight souls, made the only public speech of my life.

Said I: "Aren't you all coming?"

No one answered.

The waiter answered for them:—

"They are not going up. No one else is. This trip is made especially to carry you."

I didn't faint. I didn't even say "Thank you." I just walked as straight as I could, with a determination to look as if I were keeping my "Southern pluck up" for the sake of my friend from the Mississippi. Limply I climbed the steps to the passenger-cabin, followed by my private waiter, and fell, with sudden infirmity, into one of the luxurious red chairs.

I scarcely noticed that we were gliding out of the shed. But I came to when I found myself out under the illimitable sky, and saw running from the shed the thirty-eight who had only come to see me fly.

There were about sixty men clinging to our ropes, front and aft; sometimes their feet were off the ground, and they were dragging us out to mid-field to turn us about for the start towards Wiesbaden.

In this field was a flock of hundreds of sheep. The sheep-dog ran worriedly hither and thither, pushing his charges farther into the field. The crowd of spectators ran after us, but kept at a respectful distance.

At last, at six-forty, at a given signal, the men let go the ropes, the motors and propellers began their unearthly roar, and I felt that we were rising. I looked back at those thirty-eight cautious but curious people for a farewell. Out of all that mass of human beings only one hand raised its handkerchief to wave me farewell and God-speed—the hand from the Mississippi.

We rose and rose and rose, and yet there was no more sensation of rising than one ordinarily feels in an hotel lift.

The shed was now disappearing in the background. We were passing over a snake which I knew to be a freight-train. Now we were crossing the River Main, then over the beautiful, endless fields of grain. I ran from one side of the car to the other, afraid of missing one detail of the marvellous sights to be seen from each window.

Then I suddenly took stock of myself and my emotions.

Where was my dread? Gone with the earth.

I had never felt so happy before in my life. My mind reeled with the wonder and joy of it all. How could I have ever felt a single fear of this wonderful creature gliding so motionlessly through the heavens? Here was at last perfect safety from all the things which so terrify me on earth. Just to go on for ever—that was the only desire of my heart.

And the most singular part of it was, I did not expect ever to land on earth again. I had the feeling Columbus must have had when on the broad Atlantic bound for—where?

At any moment I expected to sight a new land—a land in the sky.

The earth was a fable—a fable of the past. We were bound for some heavenly planet. I

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felt the thrilling natural curiosity one feels about a place one is to visit for the first time.

I kept looking up, but the waiter insisted I must look down, and when I did I found that the people on earth looked to me as they must look to the birds—feet-tied.

The earth looked very soft. When I eventually descended, more than an hour after, my first thought was how *hard* the earth feels.

"Isn't it glorious?" I cried to the waiter.

"Yes," said he. "I've been up over two hundred times, and I'm always impatient for the next time to come."

That's it—it becomes a mania—it must; it is the most insidious, fascinating drug in the world, this upper ether; opium and hashish are as nothing in comparison.

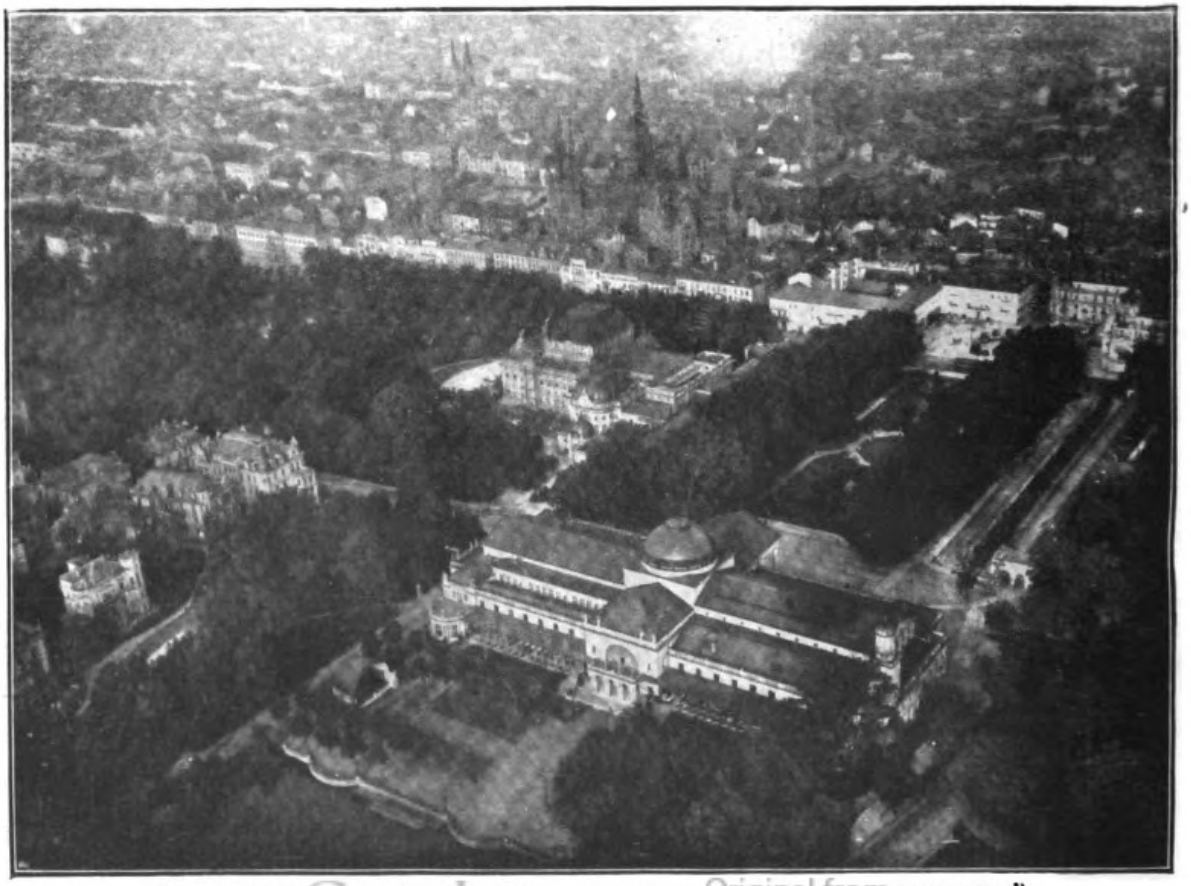
We were now passing over the village of Höchst, and everywhere the people ran out of the red peak-roofed houses to look up and wave us greetings. Beyond this village we passed over fields of grain of most varied and lively colours. Some were blood-red with poppies, some blue with cornflowers, others gold with wild mustard.

Suddenly I clapped my hands for joy, for there below us, frightened by the strange monster passing over the field of poppies, were two little hares jumping for their lives, and scampering out of the field.

Now we were passing over an avenue of poplars bordering a road that led into Wiesbaden. Wiesbaden itself dazed me somehow—it was so amazing and beautiful. I only felt an impression of the most wonderful trees in which were half-hidden handsome buildings, then a cathedral—a splendid cathedral; and then it was all gone, and in only a seeming moment we were flying over the race-track at Erbenheim. I soon began to wonder at the strange similarity of all earth when seen from a great height. It was as if one were looking at a moving picture-film that was being repeated over and over again. The only essential varieties occurred just then; they were the distant grey mountain peaks of Hofheim, Königstein, and Kronberg, but they were soon swallowed by the pearly haze of distance.

A silver ribbon curling across the earth was the Rhine.

Everywhere in the fields the late toiling peasant women, in their gay-coloured skirts and inevitable white head-kerchiefs, leaned on their rakes or scythes and stared up at us. They seldom waved. Perhaps they were tired.



"WIESBADEN DAZED ME SOMEHOW—IT WAS SO AMAZING AND BEAUTIFUL."

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A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF FRANKFORT AND THE RIVER MAIN.

Now we were passing over Sindlingen.

In the farmyards temperamental chickens had hysterics. The phlegmatic pigs kept their noses in the mud and ignored us. The haystacks looked like small pimples on the earth's face. The forests of pine were black tooth-picks with green plumes on their tops.

Quickly in succession we passed over Kelsterbach and Greisheim. Then we re-crossed the Main. The sinking copper sun, veiled in grey, was reflected in the river, and turned the waters to pinkish purple. That reflection and the hares were the prettiest sights of the voyage.

At seven-fifty-five we passed over our old home, the Luftschiffhalle, but we did not stop. On the field were two military aeroplanes; the aeronauts saluted us.

One—a Blériot—rose immediately after our passing and coquetted with us from behind.

At 8 p.m. we were over the great city of Frankfort.

Shades of Goethe! We were now passing over his house and the wine-house opposite, where his health has been drunk a million times.

Then we glided over the Bahnhof and—bless me! we were now passing directly over my own hotel. I saw the officials running out to wave their arms to me. Over the Festhalle we flew and over the outskirts of the city, then the biplane and home shed seemed rushing forward to greet us.

At eight-ten we were back over our old home field, gently coasting down the air to the ground.

Sixty men ran from the shed into the field; our captain touched a lever, and instantly ropes dangled from us fore and aft; the men on the field gripped them and tugged as they ran, sometimes with their feet off the ground.

The motors were hushed, the propellers slowly ceased their whirring, we slid gently towards the grass, and came at last to rest.

I gave a gasp as of one waking from some phantasmagorial dream.

"Your flight is over," said the waiter.

"But did I really fly?" I asked, and am still asking.

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# Creatures of Impulse.

By
P. G. WODEHOUSE.

Illustrated by
T. Victor Hall.

SIR GODFREY TANNER, K.C.M.G., was dining alone in his chambers at the Albany. Before him a plate of soup, so clear and serene that it seemed wrong to ruffle its surface, relieved the snowy whiteness of the tablecloth. Subdued lights shone on costly and tasteful furniture. Behind him Jevons, for the last fifteen years his faithful servant, wrestled decorously with a bottle of hock.

A peaceful scene.

The thought passed through Sir Godfrey's mind as he allowed his spoon to volplane slowly down into the golden lake that life was very pleasant. He had ample means. As a Colonial governor he had just that taste of power and authority which is enough for the sensible man; more might have spoiled him for the simpler pleasures of life; less would have left him restless and unsatisfied. He had had exactly enough, and was now ready to dream away the rest of his life in this exceedingly comfortable hermit's cell, supported by an excellent digestion, ministered to by the faithful Jevons.

A muffled pop behind him occurred here almost as if there had been a stage direction for it. The sound seemed to emphasize the faithfulness of Jevons, working unseen in his master's interests. It filled Sir Godfrey with a genial glow of kindliness. What a treasure Jevons was! What a model of what a gentleman's servant should be! Existence without Jevons would be unthinkable.

As he mused Jevons silently manifested himself, bottle in hand. He filled Sir Godfrey's glass.

"A little ice, Jevons."

"Very good, Sir Godfrey."

Sir Godfrey addressed himself once more to his soup. He glowed with benevolence. What an admirable fellow Jevons was! How long was it that they had been together? Fifteen years! And in all that time——

"Wow!" shrieked Sir Godfrey, and leaped from his chair with an agility highly creditable in one who strained his tailor's tact almost to breaking-point every time he had to submit himself to the tape-measure.

For one moment he doubted his senses. It was incredible that that should have happened which had happened. Jevons was Jevons. An archbishop might have done this thing, but not Jevons.

But the evidence was incontrovertible. It was—at present—solid, not to be brushed aside.

Facts were facts, even if they seemed to outrage the fundamental laws of Nature.

Jevons, for fifteen years paragon of every possible virtue, had put a piece of ice down the back of his neck!

Sir Godfrey turned like a wounded lion. There was a terrible pause.

Jevons was certainly wonderful.

He met his employer's gaze with grave solicitude.

"I think it would be wise, Sir Godfrey," he said, "if you were to change your upper garments. The night is mild, but it is unwise to risk a chill. I will go and lay out another shirt."

He disappeared silently into the bedroom, leaving Sir Godfrey staring at the spot where he had been.

Sir Godfrey received the clean shirt from his hands without a word. He had not intended the episode to proceed on these lines, but the practical sense of Jevons was too strong for him. Already the thaw had set in in earnest, and his back was both clammy and cold.

In fearful silence he changed his clothes. Then he wheeled round upon his companion of fifteen years.

"Now, then!" he snorted.

"I am extremely sorry that this should have happened, Sir Godfrey. I regret it exceedingly."

"You do, eh? You'll regret it more in a minute."

"Just so, Sir Godfrey."

There was something in the man's imperturbability which ruined the speech which the ex-governor had intended to deliver. He had meant, when he once began, to go on for about ten minutes. But somehow Jevons's attitude made it impossible to begin.

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"JEVONS, FOR FIFTEEN YEARS PARAGON OF EVERY VIRTUE, HAD PUT A PIECE OF ICE DOWN THE BACK OF HIS NECK!"



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He condensed the meaning of the proposed speech into a question.

"What did you do it for? What—the—devil did you do it for?"

"I am extremely sorry, Sir Godfrey, but I just felt I had to. It sort of came over me. It is difficult to explain myself."

"Difficult!"

"It was a kind of what I might describe as an impulse, sir. I was just coming from behind with the piece of ice in the tongs, thinking of nothing except to put it in the glass, when it suddenly crossed my mind that I'd been doing the same thing night in and night out for fifteen years, and it came over me what a long time it was and all. And then you leaned forward to drink the soup. And somehow I just couldn't resist it. I now regret it exceedingly."

Sir Godfrey gulped.

"You'll go to-morrow."

Jevons bowed.

"Shall I serve the fish, Sir Godfrey?"

He seemed to regard the incident as closed.

Dinner was resumed in silence. Sir Godfrey's mind was still in a whirl. All he realized clearly was that the end of the world had come. He had dismissed Jevons, and without Jevons life was impossible. But he was not going to alter his decision. By Gad, no! not if he had to spend the rest of his existence in beastly hotels being maddened to distraction by a set of blanked incompetents who were probably foreign spies. And that seemed to him at the moment his only course, for the idea of engaging a successor to the victim of impulse was too bizarre to be grappled with yet. At whatever cost to himself, Jevons must go. That was settled and done with.

"I mean it," he snapped, over his shoulder, as the other filled his liqueur-glass.

"Sir?"

"I say I mean it. What I said. You must go."

"Just so, Sir Godfrey."

He placed the cigars on the table. Sir Godfrey selected one, cracked the end of it, and placed it in the flame which his still faithful servant held for him. It was a magnificent cigar, and the first puff almost softened him to the extent of changing his mind. But dignity jerked at the reins.

"Of course I'll give you a character."

"Thank you, Sir Godfrey, but I do not feel as if I could take service with anybody but yourself. I have saved money. I shall retire."

"Please yourself."

"Just so, Sir Godfrey."

"Leave me your address."

"Sir?"

Sir Godfrey scowled. He was feeling nervous. More, there was a suggestion of a death-bed parting about this interview which he found strangely weakening. Fifteen years! As Jevons had said, it was a long time.

"Your address. You know perfectly well that I promised you a small—er—confound it!—the pension, man!"

"I had imagined that after what has occurred——"

"Don't be a fool. That will be all. I am going to the club. I shall not want you any more to-night."

"Very good, sir."

He closed the door softly. Sir Godfrey sat on, chewing the end of his cigar.

A week later Sir Godfrey sat in his private sitting-room at the Hotel Guelph and kicked moodily at a foot-stool.

"This," he said to himself, "is perfectly infernal."

He got up and began to pace the room.

"If I stop any longer in this pot-house I shall go mad."

Of course he was doing the place an injustice. The Guelph is one of the three best hotels in London. The management pride themselves on making guests as comfortable as modern ingenuity will allow. There was every possible convenience in this suite to which Sir Godfrey had fled from an Albany which for him was now haunted.

And Sir Godfrey spoke of it as a pot-house. But then, the Hotel Guelph had one defect which outweighed all its merits. It could not supply him with a valet who had been with him for fifteen years. Losing Jevons was like losing a leg.

But he was not going to take him back. All his life he had been a victim to what his admirers called determination and his detractors pig-headedness, and he never reversed a decision.

"I'll get out of here to-day," he said to himself.

A thought struck him. "I'll go and spend a week or two with George."

He wondered why he had not thought of it before. He saw now where his initial mistake had lain: he had tried to carry on, without Jevons, the sort of life with which Jevons had been so closely associated. It was all very well to leave the Albany and move to the Guelph, but that was not enough. He was still in the groove in which he had been in the days before Jevons had left him.

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He still spent his evenings at his club, rode in the Row, and so on—actions irretrievably connected with Jevons. What he must do, he decided, was to get temporarily into some entirely different *milieu*. He must go to the country. And it was the thought of the country which had suggested George.

George Tanner kept a private school in Kent. What was more, he had started this school on money lent to him by Sir Godfrey. The money had since been returned, with interest, for George's venture had proved a success; but Sir Godfrey considered that his nephew had cause to be grateful to him, and consequently saw no reason why he should not descend upon him in the middle of term demanding food and shelter. He did not even prepay the telegram in which he announced his visit, but arrived on the heels of it, sure of his welcome.

George received him with a rather worried geniality. He stood in awe of his uncle, as did most of those who knew him. Sir Godfrey in years gone by had spanked him with a hair-brush for breaking his bedroom-window with a tennis-ball, and this and similar episodes of the stormy past coloured George's attitude towards him, even though he was now in the thirties and had begun to grow grey at the temples. Besides, in a school even the most genial visitor is not an unmixed blessing. And George's school was peculiar in the respect that there was no sharp division between the boys' part of the house and that of the proprietor. It was a rambling old mansion, in which the inhabitants lived like a large family. Sir Godfrey had not anticipated this.

There were boys everywhere, in the house and out of it; boys who yelled unexpectedly in a man's ear; boys who shot out of doorways at incredible rates of speed within a hair's breadth of a man's prominent and sensitive solar plexus; boys who, when once their shyness had worn off, asked a man endless questions on every subject under the sun. Nephew George seemed rather to enjoy this sort of thing, but in the first few days of his visit it nearly drove Sir Godfrey mad.

A hundred times he was on the point of leaving, but every time the thought of solitude in an hotel kept him where he was. And then, one morning as he lay in bed, he achieved an attitude of mind which he felt would enable him to bear his present mode of life with fortitude, if not with enjoyment.

This visit to George's school, he told himself, must be regarded in the light of a sort of mental discipline. It was a kind of Purgatory. A man of his years could not change his habits smoothly, like a motor-car changing speeds. There must be an interval, the more unpleasant and unlike his old life the better, for thus would it stick the more firmly in his memory, and form the more admirable corrective to vain regret. For the rest of his life, as he sat in his solitary hotel sitting-room, instead of mourning the fact that he was not at the Albany with Jevons he would be thanking a kindly Providence that he was not at his Nephew George's school.

It was the same process of thought which leads the philosopher suffering from a blend of toothache and earache to cheer himself up by reflecting how much worse it would be if he had a combination of rheumatism and St. Vitus's dance.

He had found the solution. It was simply wonderful what a difference it made. His whole nervous system became miraculously soothed. Where when a sprinting boy whizzed past his waistcoat he had puffed and trembled for minutes afterwards in an ecstasy of fear and indignation, he now stood firm and calm, and sometimes even achieved an indulgent smile.

As the days passed the indulgent smile became more and more frequent. The process was so subtle that he could not have said when it had begun, but frequently now he could almost have declared that he was enjoying himself. He was beginning to revise his views upon the boys. These boys here, whom he had lumped together in his mind with all other existing small boys under the collective head of nuisances, began to develop individual characters. With something of the thrill of a scientific discovery, he awoke to the fact that boys were human beings, who did things for definite reasons and not purely from innate deviltry. The reason, for instance, why Thomas Billing, aged eleven, had eaten a slice of bread covered with brown boot-polish, thereby acquiring a severe bout of sickness and a heavy punishment, was that Rupert Atkinson, aged fourteen, and Alexander Jones, aged twelve, had betted him he wouldn't. He had done it, in short, not for the pleasure of making himself ill, but to keep his word and preserve his self-respect. Nations have gone to war for reasons less compelling.

Thomas Billing explained the ethics of this particular episode to Sir Godfrey in person; and it may be said that the latter's rejuvenation really began from that conversation. For it led to what was practically a friendship between them, and in the constant

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society of Thomas Sir Godfrey renewed his youth.

It was so long since he had been a boy that the process of rejuvenation hung fire at the start; but, once started, it was rapid. In the third week of his uncle's visit, Nephew George, with the feeling of one who sees miracles, gazed, fascinated, at the spectacle of his guest playing cricket in the stable-yard. He was playing unskilfully, but with extreme energy, and his face, when he joined George, was damp and scarlet.

A belated sense of his dignity awoke in Sir Godfrey. He felt that it behoved him to keep George in a state of respectful subjection.

"I have been doing my best to amuse these little fellows, George."

"I was watching you."

Sir Godfrey coughed a little self-consciously.

"They seemed to wish me to join in their game. I did not like to disappoint them. I suppose, many years ago, one would have found a positive pleasure in ridiculous foolery of that sort. It seems hardly credible, but I imagine there was a time when I might really have enjoyed it."

"It's a good game."

"For children, possibly. Merely for children. However, it certainly appears to be capital exercise. My doctor strongly recommended me exercise. I—I have half a mind to play again to-morrow."

"If you enjoy it——"

"Enjoy is altogether too strong a word. If I decide to play, it will be entirely for the sake of the exercise. A man of my build requires a certain amount of exercise. My doctor was emphatic."

"Quite right."

"By Gad, I'll do it every day!" said Sir Godfrey.



"'WHAT'S THE MATTER, MY BOY?' HE INQUIRED."

One morning, towards the end of the fourth week of his visit, the ex-governor, sunning himself after breakfast, came upon his young friend, Thomas Billing, plainly depressed. The morning was so perfect, and he himself was feeling so entirely at peace with the world, that Sir Godfrey noted the depression as a remarkable phenomenon. That he should have noted it at all is proof of the alteration in his outlook. A week or so before he would simply have seen a small boy, with his hands in his pockets, kicking pebbles; and, if he had given the matter a second thought, would merely have felt relieved that

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the boy was not shouting or rushing about. The humanizing process had, however, sharpened his faculties, and he now perceived clearly that on Thomas Billing's youthful mind there was a burden, that for some reason Black Care was perched upon Thomas Billing's youthful back.

"What's the matter, my boy?" he inquired.

"It's an air-gun," said Thomas, with a certain vagueness.

"An air-gun?"

"My air-gun. He's confiscated it."

The pronoun "he," used without reference to a foregoing substantive, indicated Nephew George.

Sir Godfrey acted in a manner which would have amazed him if he could have foreseen it a few weeks back. Now there seemed nothing unusual about it at all. He took out a shilling. He was feeling quite surprisingly in sympathy with the boy.

"Cheer up, my boy," he said. "Buy yourself something with this, and forget about it."

He proceeded upon his way, leaving Thomas in a state of speechless gratitude.

Sir Godfrey went to his nephew's study. He had not yet finished reading the morning paper, and it was usually to be found there. It was not immediately visible. He looked round the room. His eye was caught by a lethal weapon lying on the window-sill.

He picked it up.

There is probably no action possible to a man which so unfailingly restores his vanished youth as the handling of an air-gun. There is something in the feel of the wood and the gleam of the steel which rolls away the years as if by some magic spell. Toying with the confiscated gun of Thomas Billing, Sir Godfrey was a boy again. How long was it since he had handled one of these things? Years? Centuries? Not a bit of it. A few minutes, he was prepared to swear.

"By Gad," he murmured, as he took imaginary aim, "I've killed sparrows with these things! By Gad I have! It all comes back to me, by Gad!"

He ran his eye lovingly along the barrel.

Crime is the result, in nine cases out of ten, of impulse. It is the chemical outcome of opportunity reacting upon a mood. A man commits murder because, when in a certain mood, he finds a knife ready to his hand. Neither the mood nor the knife alone would produce the crime.

Sir Godfrey was in a dangerously-excited mood. He was not himself. He was, indeed, at that moment, a matter of fifty years younger than himself. And to him, in this state of mind, Fate presented, almost simultaneously, a box of ammunition and Herbert, the school gardener.

The box lay open on the window-sill. The broad back view of Herbert appeared beside a flower-bed not twenty yards away.

No boy could have resisted the temptation; and Sir Godfrey in the last five minutes had become a boy.

He took careful aim and fired.

It was stupendous. Herbert, a good two hundred pounds of solid flesh, leaped like a young gazelle. From behind the curtain where he lurked Sir Godfrey, with gleaming eyes, saw him turn and turn again, scanning the world for the author of this outrage. For a full minute he looked accusingly at the house, while the house looked back at him with its empty windows. Then, his lips moving silently, he bent to his work again.

Sir Godfrey crept from his hiding-place and dipped his fingers into the box of bullets.

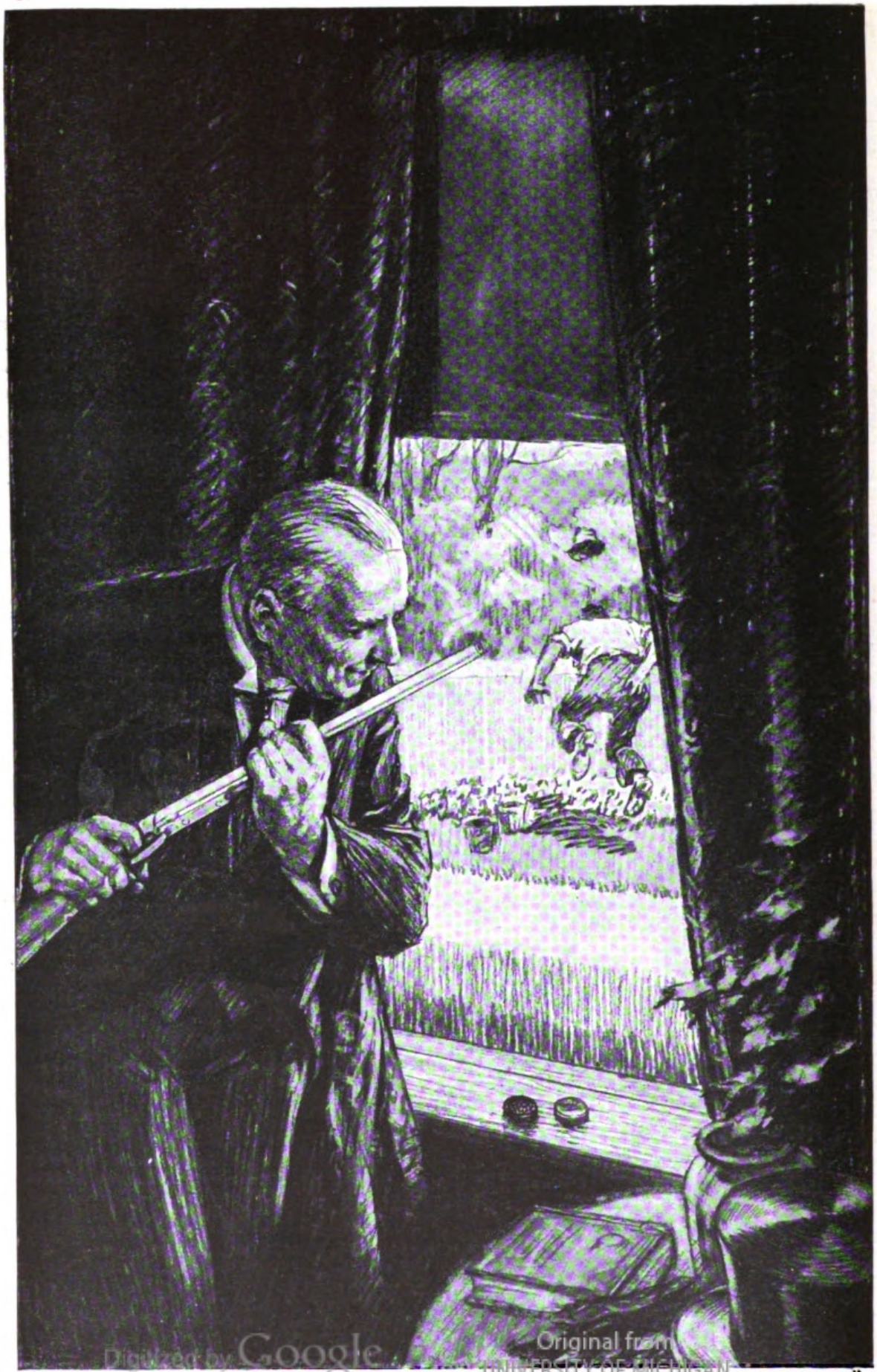
If it were not for the aftermath, crime would be the jolliest thing in the world. Sir Godfrey discovered this. His actual crime gave him the happiest five minutes he could recall in a long and not ill-spent life. The phut of the bullets on Herbert's corduroys had been music to his ears. During the actual engagement he had been quite drunk with sinful pride at the accuracy of his aim and the Red Indian cunning with which he secreted his portly form behind the curtain at the exact moment when his victim faced wrathfully round.

And then his wild mood vanished as swiftly as it had come. One moment he was a happy child, pumping lead into the lower section of a gardener; the next, a man of age, position, and respectability, acutely conscious of having committed an unpardonable assault on a harmless fellow-citizen. He sank back into a convenient chair, his face a light mauve, the nearest approach Nature would permit to an ashen pallor.

Ghastly thoughts raced, jostling each other, through his brain. Discovery—action for assault and battery—vindictive prosecutor—heavy fine—query: imprisonment?—strong remarks from the Bench—ruined reputation—or, worse, verdict of insanity—evening of life spent in padded cell!

And he was the man who had dismissed Jevons, good, faithful, honest Jevons, after fifteen years of service, for a mere peccadillo.

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"HERBERT, A GOOD TWO HUNDRED POUNDS OF SOLID FLESH, LEAPED LIKE A YOUNG GAZELLE."

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At dinner that night Nephew George appeared amused.

"It's nothing to laugh at, really," he said, "but you can't help it. I was laughing when I licked him—Young Tom Billing. Apparently he spent a happy morning shooting at the gardener with an air-gun. With a confiscated air-gun, too! You never know what the little brutes——"

Sir Godfrey uttered a strangled gurgle.

"George! George, my dear boy! What are you saying?"

"Your friend Tom——"

"But how——?"

"The gardener came to me and made a complaint. I harangued the school and invited the criminal to confess. The Billing child stepped forward."

"He said that he did it!"

"Yes. Why, what's the matter, uncle?"

Sir Godfrey drew a deep breath.

"Nothing, my boy; nothing at all," he said.

Sir Godfrey writhed in his bed, a chastened man. Relief, shame, and a stunned admiration for the quixotic generosity of the younger generation forbade sleep. He could understand the whole thing so clearly. This boy Billing must have seen the episode, realized the consequences if it were brought home to the real criminal, and, prompted by pure amiability—supplemented possibly by gratitude for that shilling—sacrificed himself to save his friend. Among the few pleasant thoughts which came to Sir Godfrey that night was the resolve to make Thomas Billing his sole heir, give him a pony, buy him everything he could suggest, and take him to the pantomime next Christmas.

He met the young hero next morning after breakfast. To his surprise, his benefactor seemed more than a little sheepish. He shuffled his feet. He even blushed.

Finally he spoke.

"I hope you aren't frightfully sick about it, sir. I know it was frightful cheek my pretending I had done it, after you'd thought of it and all that; but I thought you wouldn't mind. It was awfully decent of you not to give me away. You don't know what a difference it makes to a chap if chaps think he's done a thing like that. It makes them look up to you frightfully. I only came here this term, and I'm too small to be much good at games just yet, so of course they don't think much of me. But now, you see, it's all right."

Sir Godfrey was silent.

"You don't really mind my saying it was me, do you?" said Thomas, anxiously. "Of course, if you say I must, I'll tell them that it was really you. It'll make things rather rotten for me, but, if you want me to——"

"By no means. By no means. By—ah!—by no means."

"Thanks awfully, sir," said Thomas, gratefully.

There was a pause.

"I expect you really think it was frightful cheek, don't you, sir? I honestly didn't mean to do it, because I'd seen the whole thing and I knew I'd no right to pretend it was me. But when He asked who had done it, it—it sort of came over me."

Sir Godfrey uttered a startled cry.

"The impulse of the moment!"

"Yes, sir."

Sir Godfrey had produced paper and was writing.

"I want you to take a telegram for me at once to the village, my little man," he said. "I will tell Mr. Tanner I sent you. It is most important. Here it is. Can you read it? My handwriting is shaky this morning. I am much disturbed, much disturbed."

Thomas scanned the message.

"Jones, 193, Adelaide Street, Fulham Road, London."

"Jevons, Jevons, Jevons, my boy; not Jones. J-e-v-o-n-s."

"'Be prepared to rejoin me in—in——'"

"'Instantly. Everything forgiven. Await letter. Godfrey Tanner.' There, you have it now. Run with it at once. It is most—it is vitally important."

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# The Big Three In Golf

## VARDON TAYLOR AND BRAID

## TELL THE STORY OF THEIR BEGINNINGS

**Illustrated by Tom Wilkinson.**

GOLF is not only a game of thrills, of emotions, of mysteries; it is a game of seeming miracles also, and the greatest and most enduring of these are the triumphs of Harry Vardon, John Henry Taylor, and James Braid in the Open Championship.

Well, in their utter supremacy, are they called the Big Three. In no other branch of sport is there anything of the kind that is comparable to the achievement of these three men. You remember what a wonderful racehorse Ormonde was considered to be! What a superlative cricketer was W. G. Grace! How fine at billiards was John Roberts! Each sport and game has its master heroes like these. But in golf it is just as if we had three of them at the same time, exact contemporaries of each other; and indeed the nature of their achievement makes it in some ways more wonderful than if three Ormondes had flashed in a dead-heat with each other past the winning-post at Epsom.

Skill tells well in golf, but there is a strong luck-element always in the game. Let the ball fly a foot lower than it might have done, or run a yard farther in a dangerous line, and there is a trouble which may cost strokes and the championship. Yet the skill of the Big Three has been so brilliant that they have been able to discount entirely this element of luck. That is the chief wonder of it all; only the Big Three can laugh at the luck of golf.

However good a golfer may be, the odds against his ever winning the Open Championship more than once are very heavy. Alexander Herd is by common consent one of the greatest golfers of the time; he has never won it once. Arnaud Massy of France is magnificent at times, but he has only won it once. Jack White has something of the genius in him, especially on the putting-greens, and he has only won it once. Edward Ray, one of the most physically powerful players the game has known, and one with some remarkable methods, has only won it once. And after these there are many magnificent golfers who have never won it at all. George Duncan, in some ways the most brilliant player, with one exception, of modern times, has never yet won it. Those whose names have been given, and Mr. Harold Hilton, an amateur, are the only players who have broken into the plain straight run of success that has attended the efforts of the Big Three since one of them, Taylor, first won a championship, in 1894. Only four times in twenty years have they let the championship slip them. When one has won another has generally been second or third; more than once they have occupied the first three places. In the spring of 1906, when the young players were showing prominence, it was said that the days of these three as champions were numbered; but at the championship at Muirfield that year they, by way of answer, occupied the first three places. This year it was said again they could not last, and as each had now won five championships, and a marvellous equality had been gained, it was taken as an omen and declared that there would be no more Big Three victories. But Vardon started a new series with another win, and Taylor was second to him.

Now here we shall give a table which will show the remarkable hold that the Big Three have had on the Open Championship ever since they first took possession of it. It shows their positions in the final lists in each year since the three of them began to compete regularly:—

| | Vardon. | Taylor. | Braid. | | Vardon. | Taylor. | Braid. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1894 | 5 | 1 | 10 | 1905 | 9 | 2 | 1 |
| 1895 | 9 | 1 | — | 1906 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 1896 | 1 | 2 | 6 | 1907 | 7 | 2 | 5 |
| 1897 | 6 | 10 | 12 | 1908 | 5 | 7 | 1 |
| 1898 | 1 | 4 | 11 | 1909 | 26 | 1 | 2 |
| 1899 | 1 | 4 | 5 | 1910 | 16 | 14 | 1 |
| 1900 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 1911 | 1 | 5 | 5 |
| 1901 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 1912 | 2 | 11 | 3 |
| 1902 | 2 | 6 | 2 | 1913 | 3 | 1 | 18 |
| 1903 | 1 | 9 | 5 | 1914 | 1 | 2 | 10 |
| 1904 | 5 | 2 | 2 | | | | |

A full night's entertainment may be derived from a contemplation of these remarkable figures, indicating, as they do, an extent of success that is unparalleled in this or any other sport.

Nothing can ever dim the lustre of this amazing achievement of the Big Three.

How have they come by such remarkable capacity for playing this difficult game as no others can play it? In what circumstances did their transcendent genius blossom? As to that, the story of their origins and beginnings is one that is best told by themselves. In the following little chapters of autobiography each of the Big Three has told to the readers of THE STRAND MAGAZINE how he came into this game and the conditions in which he first played.

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# HARRY VARDON,

## Open Champion

1896, 1898, 1899, 1903, 1911, and 1914.



*Photo. by Sport & General.*

I was born in Jersey, at the little place called Grouville, which is a few miles from St. Heliers. My father and mother were both natives of the island. A rather remarkable record was held by my father, who died recently at the age of eighty-three, for he was a gardener from his boyhood until nearly the end, and in the whole of his life he only changed his place of employment once. We were a large family, six boys and two girls, and I was fourth on the list and was born on May 9th, 1870, so that I am now over forty-four years of age.

Perhaps it was to some extent by an accident that I became a golfer at all. In my earliest years there was nothing whatever known about the game on the island, and there was so little of it played in England then that it could have been no matter of surprise if the game had not found its way there for many years after I had grown up. In the circumstances it seemed likely that I should become a gardener like my father.

I went to the village school, but I do not remember that I learned very much. Mr. Boomer, my old schoolmaster, was by no means proud of me then, though he admitted he was some time later, when he saw me win a championship at Sandwich. I played truant frequently, and I remember I did so very thoroughly at times, for I had bouts of being truant that lasted three weeks. Physically I was thin and rather delicate, with not much real strength, but I was very fond of games. One of my ambitions at that time was to become a good cricketer. I was good at football, and I kept up this game for long after I had achieved success in golf. Even after I had won the Open Championship three times and the American championship once, I captained the Ganton football team and played regularly in the club matches.

The crisis occurred when I was seven. One Sunday a party of gentlemen from England came along our way and began to mark out the common land and make what we afterwards knew were tees and putting-greens upon it. Everybody about Grouville led such a quiet, undisturbed life in those days that this intrusion caused much uneasiness, and it was none the less for the fact that it occurred on a Sunday. The tenant-farmers and others were very angry, and talked of taking steps to expel the strangers; but the latter armed themselves with authority, and we soon found that we had to tolerate them. So the golfers and the natives made friends of each other. When the course was arranged (it needed very little making, for the land was splendid for the game), more golfers came from England, and what became the Royal Jersey Golf Club was established, with its headquarters at a little inn near to the course, which was at once called the Golf Inn.

Those golfers, of course, needed caddies, and all the little boys round about were brought into their service. I was one of them, and that was my first introduction to the game. It did not attract me very much at the first experience of it, but after a little while it began to dawn on me that there was far more in it than had appeared. Like most of the other boys, I experienced a desire to play it myself, but was in the same difficulty as they were—no course, no clubs, no balls, and no money. But golfers will never be denied, no matter what kind of golfers they are, and we surmounted all these difficulties.

We laid out a little course of our very own. It had only four holes, and each of them was only about fifty yards long, but as all of us were only round about seven years of age they were long enough. For balls we used



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big white marbles such as boys play with. Taws they were called, and perhaps they were about half the size of an ordinary golf-ball. The club difficulty was the most serious. In these days caddies who would learn something of the game can generally become possessed of an old club or two without much difficulty. They are so plentiful. But it was not the same in those times; golfers did not make gifts then. It became clear that if we were to have clubs we should have to make them still think are the best—but the socketed clubs are the commonest now. After a little while we became fairly expert in making these clubs, and sought for improvements. We found the heads were liable to crack, and so we sheathed them in tin. Now and again a club would come out better than the others, and would earn a reputation for itself and its maker.

With these materials we golfed on our little four-holes course. Many of our matches were



"I WAS ONE OF THE CADDIES, AND THAT WAS MY FIRST INTRODUCTION TO THE GAME."

ourselves, and so we did. After many experiments we concluded that the branches of the tree called the lady oak were most suitable to our purposes, and we would cut a thick branch from such a tree, saw off a few inches from it, and then trim it and shape it with a pocket-knife until it resembled the head of a driver.

For the shafts we got sticks made of thorn, white or black, and we fastened them into the heads by boring holes in the latter with a red-hot poker and then tightening up the stick in the holes with wedges. Perhaps those were the first socketed drivers that were ever made. It was the general fashion in those days to play with spliced drivers—which I played in the brilliant Jersey moonlight, and we conducted score-play competitions. Two or three of us were always forward at the places where the balls were likely to be driven to while the others were driving, and as we could not see the balls flying through the night air we had to listen for the thud of their falling and locate them in that way. I fear we had less of the strong sporting spirit in us in those days than we should have had. It is practically beyond doubt that we were in the habit of giving our respective balls a kick nearer the hole when opportunity offered to do it without the others knowing, as it did frequently in the moonlight. But by real honest play we often got threes at

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those fifty-yard holes with those poor tools in the half-darkness, and I have done worse things than that since I have won championships.

By and by some real golf-clubs and balls came my way, and when I had passed ten years of age I began to study the game in some sort of earnest, though not, of course, with any notion that I should ever become a professional or achieve any distinction at it. Never in my life have I had a lesson from anyone, but ever since I can remember I have watched and studied every player of any quality. There are few from whom even the best of golfers cannot learn something. I took no one man as a model, but would copy a little from one player and a little from another until I gradually built up a game of my own. For a little boy I began to play fairly well.

Of course, at an early age I had to go to work. At thirteen I became a gardener to a Major Spofforth, who was a keen golfer. When he had no one else to play with he would sometimes take me out with him; and one day he said to me, very earnestly, "Harry, my boy, take my advice and never give up golf! It may be very useful to you some day." I shall never forget his saying that.

I was a rather nervous young player in those early matches. I joined a working men's golf club, which used to hold a competition for a vase, the conditions being that six medal rounds on the full course were to be played, one a month. When five had been played I was leading by so many strokes that it was really impossible to catch me up, although I was handicapped rather heavily at plus three. My brother Tom, who was also a keen golfer, and had progressed in much the same way that I had, by this time had gone to England and had become a professional at St. Annes, where he was doing well. He had won a prize in a tournament, and I thought that what he could do I could. Tom wrote to me saying there was a professional appointment at Ripon that I might get if I applied. I did apply and was appointed. I had then only played five times for the vase, and the date for playing the sixth time was a fortnight off, when it became necessary for me to leave Jersey for Ripon. In the circumstances the committee kindly gave me permission to play my sixth round at once, and I did so and won the trophy—my first. It is still on my mantelpiece, and one of the most precious of all my prizes. I was twenty years of age then.

Six years later I won my first Open Championship, at Muirfield, after a tie with my old friend, J. H. Taylor, with whom I had such a terrible and unforgettable duel in this year's championship at Prestwick, when once again, as in those earliest days, the fight for the highest honours in the championship lay between us two.

## J. H. TAYLOR,

### Open Champion

### 1894, 1895, 1900, 1909, and 1913.

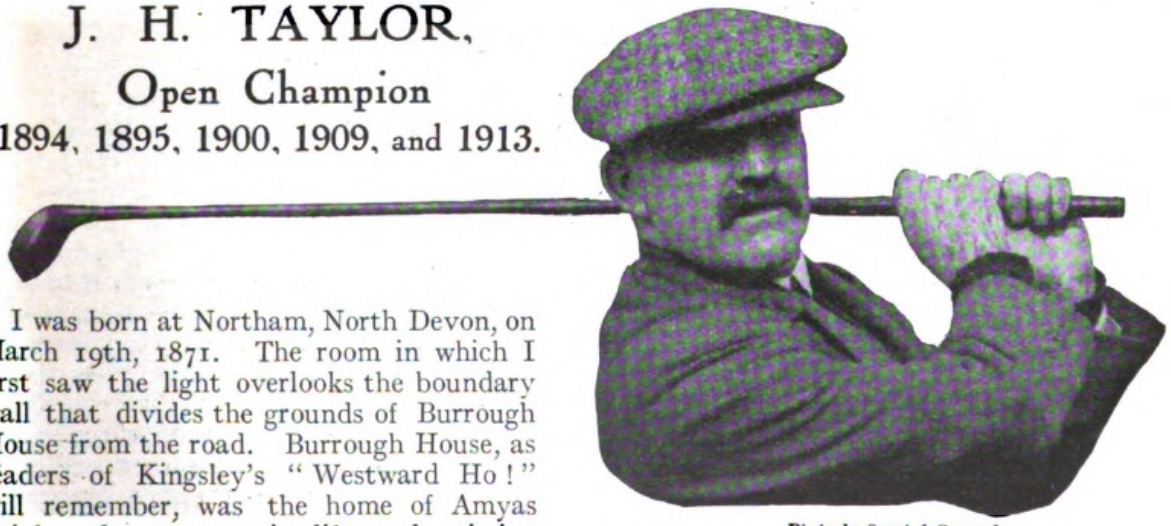


*Photo. by Sport & General.*

I was born at Northam, North Devon, on March 19th, 1871. The room in which I first saw the light overlooks the boundary wall that divides the grounds of Burrough House from the road. Burrough House, as readers of Kingsley's "Westward Ho!" will remember, was the home of Amyas Leigh, whose romantic life and stirring adventures make the pages of that work palpitate with courage and devotion.

My parents came of an old Devonshire stock, my mother being a Barnstaple woman, while my father was of an old Northam family. I was the second of a family of five, four boys and one girl. My father, who was a big, brawny, bearded man, was a workman who could turn his hand to do any kind of work. Whether it was the sinking of a well or quarrying stones, it was all the same to him, so long as it was work. Work, hard and toilsome, was what he wanted in order to feed

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and clothe the children, and when he was without work a more miserable man never existed. In my earliest recollection of my surroundings my father was a mason's labourer, whose wages never were more than sixteen shillings a week—not excessive remuneration, and one that left but little over for luxuries when everything was paid for.

Both my parents, I am proud to say, were gifted with very keen intellects. Both were brainy, and each took a delight in reading and studying the topics of the day. It therefore goes without saying that they were fully cognizant of the value of a good education, and they were always exhorting us to make the most of the schooling that was provided for us. There was no free education then, and I remember with a little pain the efforts of my mother, who had to scrape together somehow the few school pence on Monday mornings. But there were many Monday mornings when I could not pay, and had to tell the master with something akin to shame that I would bring it next week. I was soon brought to realize the value of a penny, and every single one that I could earn in any way was taken home and placed proudly in my mother's hand.

We went along well fed and contented when father was in full work, but there came a time when he became ailing and unwell, and then we felt the pinch of poverty. It was a grim struggle for poor mother, and let me here record with gratitude the noble battle she made to keep the wolf from the door. Early and late she used to slave at the wash-tub, hard, gruelling work, as every woman knows. In addition to this, the household work had to be done, and poor mother had to do it, and many a night I was awakened after midnight by hearing her dragging her weary footsteps upstairs to snatch a few hours' sleep.

I was kept at school, and I think I can say with all modesty that I was a good scholar. I had the knack of learning quickly, and was eager and willing to learn everything that came my way. I could see that knowledge was power, and I determined to possess it if I could. The half-timer system was in vogue at Northam in those days, which meant that when a scholar reached a certain standard he was allowed off in the afternoon. We went straight to the golf-links in the hope of earning a stray sixpence.

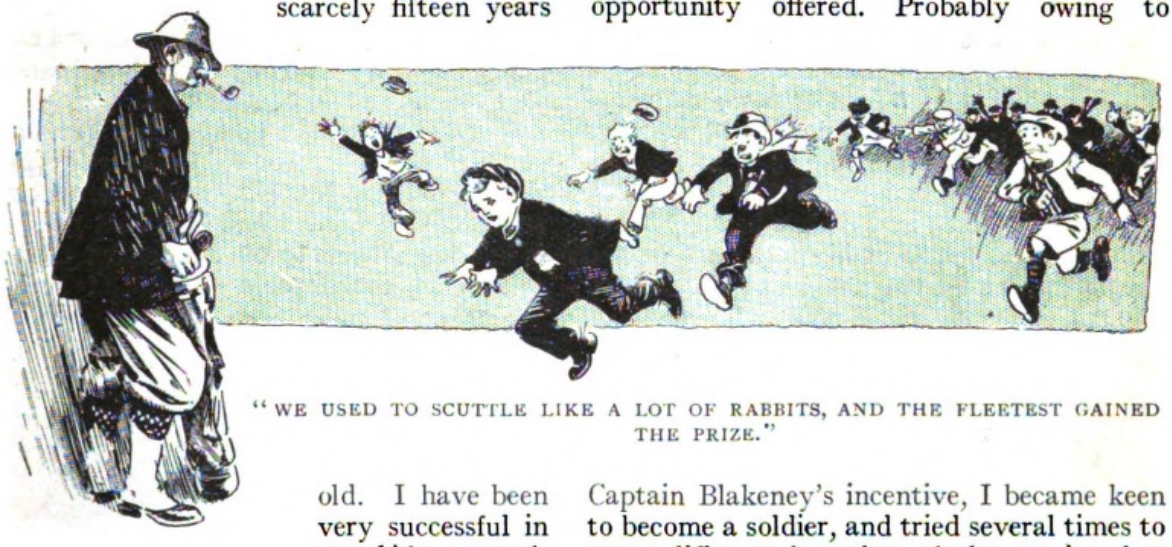
There was no caddie-master with his regular roster of caddies. Each had to get his job as best he could, and many were the subterfuges we used to employ in order to outwit our fellows. It was good experience, and made us very keen and sharp. In addition to these half-days, Saturdays and holidays saw me on the links, coming by a desperate liking for the game, but one which was subordinate to the earning of money. This was the first consideration. I well remember the first sixpence I earned as a caddie, and how proud I was to carry it in triumph home to my mother. I continued at school until I was eleven years of age, when, having reached the sixth standard, I left, and then commenced my real battle with the world. As caddying was somewhat precarious and uncertain, I cast about for something in addition that would have a steadying and certain influence on the week's pay. I went as a boot-boy, whose duties consisted of cleaning boots and knives, running messages, and that kind of thing. The usual pay was 2s. 6d. a week, with a breakfast thrown in, and it was looked upon as quite a comfortable sort of job. It meant two or three hours' work in the morning, after which I was free to attend the links to pick up what was going.

One of the first boot-boy jobs that I had was at the house of General Hutchinson, who had a son named Horace, who was easily the best golfer of Westward Ho! but who was then at Oxford. Being a caddie, it can be imagined with what joy I used to look forward to Mr. Horace's return home for his vacation. Certainly it meant another pair of shoes to clean, but what of that? Did I not have the honour of cleaning the shoes of the greatest golfer in the world? We caddies used to think that this was of a surety true, and who would dare say we were wrong? Whether we were or not, I know I used to expend additional elbow-grease when brushing Mr. Horace's shoes. I tried to bring as great a lustre on the face of the shoes as would befit the lustre that the wearer of them held as a golfer. I trust I succeeded; somehow I think I did. Certainly Mr. Horace never complained, and he was most particular in those days.

I was very happy then; the only sorrow I had was the continued illness of my poor father, whose abstention from work still made the struggle hard for my mother. It was a hard fight to make ends meet, and now that I am the father of a growing family myself I can, if but faintly, understand the great anxiety that my mother felt and the weariness it cost her to feed and clothe five hungry children. There was one incident which made a very sad impression on my

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youthful mind and which I shall never forget to my dying day. It was in the winter time and during one of my father's periods of illness. The coal-cart had called and the man was asked if he could give us credit for a half-hundredweight of coal for a few days, and he refused. I can well remember my mother breaking down and crying bitterly, and I am not ashamed to say that my tears mingled with hers. It was a bitter and humiliating experience, but I am certain it did me good. It made me realize that money was necessary, even for bare comfort in this world, and it inculcated into my soul the virtue of being thrifty. My father died soon after—died, as the doctor said, simply from hard work. He died in his forty-fifth year, when I was scarcely fifteen years old. I have been very successful in my life, much more successful than I could possibly have dreamt of being; but my one regret is that my dear dad did not live to see me become a champion golfer. If the struggle for mother was hard when he was alive, it became harder now. There were three younger than I who could not earn a penny, so I and my eldest brother Bob had to redouble our efforts on the links.



"WE USED TO SCUTTLE LIKE A LOT OF RABBITS, AND THE FLEETEST GAINED THE PRIZE."

I think I can claim to have been a very diligent caddie. I certainly did my best to get hold of every chance that presented itself to earn a sixpence, and I tried my best to give satisfaction to my employers. This was a matter of no little difficulty, as it seems to me now that the golfer of the old days was more difficult to please than the modern type. We had to run to get our jobs in those days. Whenever we saw a golfer in the distance away we used to scuttle like a lot of rabbits, and the fleetest gained the prize. Often have I run till my heart nigh burst, and I shall never forget my chagrin and remorse when I found myself outstripped by one who was a better runner than myself. This, also, I have no doubt, did me an immense amount of good, as it tended to make me rely on my own efforts, even if these efforts were very hard and straining for a boy.

I stayed on the links as a caddie until I was fifteen years of age, when I thought it behoved me to look out for something more stable. I went as an odd boy in the employ of Captain Blakeney. He was a splendid gentleman and imbued with the finest traditions of the naval service, in which he had spent the greater part of his life. I stayed with Captain Blakeney for four years, in the meantime still keeping up my love for the game and practising hard whenever opportunity offered. Probably owing to Captain Blakeney's incentive, I became keen to become a soldier, and tried several times to enter different branches of the service, but my eyesight, which was always a little weak, proved an insurmountable barrier. I tried again and again, but the recruiting-sergeant was adamant. I even attempted to join the Militia, but it was no good. They had no use for me even there. I am not ashamed to confess that these repeated rebuffs made me very sad. I could see nothing in front of me but the life of a labourer, and I had to take what offered, and went as a mason's labourer. There may be harder work than that; if so, I am sorry for the doer of it! From six-thirty in the morning until six o'clock at night carrying heavy hods of mortar and bricks up long and steep ladders is hard work indeed. This I did for two years at a wage of fifteen shillings a week, and I think I can safely say I earned it.

I was well known to the gentlemen at the golf club, who had known me ever since I was a child, and it is to those kind gentlemen that I owe my start toward my present

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position. A vacancy occurred on the staff of groundmen on the links. This staff consisted of two, and the Green Committee's thoughts turned toward me. I was offered the job and seized hold of it with both hands. My skill as a player was of great assistance to me as a greenkeeper. I knew what was required, and I got on well. I also had greater facilities for polishing up my game, seeing that I was on the links all and every day. I was as happy as the day was long; the work was most congenial, and was in connection with the game I loved.

I had been at this greenkeeping for twelve months when the position of greenkeeper and professional was offered me at the new club at Burnham, in Somerset. It may seem curious to my readers, but I debated with myself the wisdom of accepting. I argued thus—suppose I accepted, was tried, and found wanting, I should have lost my permanent billet and I should have had to return home to the life of the labourer. It was the parting of the ways and, as I thought, a great crisis in my life. My mother, always hopeful and optimistic, urged me to go in and do my best. She, at all events, was sure of her son. I accepted the post with misgivings. It was on January 1st, 1891, that I left my mother's roof to do real battle with the world. I tried hard and was very successful at Burnham, where I made many friends, not the least being Andrew Kirkaldy, whom I met in a match there in 1892. I stayed at Burnham for two years, then shifted on to Winchester. I entered for the Open Championship at Prestwick in 1893, and did far better than I ever imagined. At Sandwich the following year I was fortunate enough to come out top, and have been successful four times since.

My mother still lives, I am happy to say, and takes an absorbing interest in everything I do. In return for the sacrifices that she has made for me I have endeavoured to make her declining years comfortable and, I trust, happy. I married one of the best of Devon girls, and we have seven children, five girls and two boys, one of whom, I trust, will do some good at the game at which J. H., senior, has found so much pleasure and contentment.

My life, up to the present, has been most successful, far more so than, perhaps, I deserve. It has brought me into contact with so much that is good and kind that my heart is full of gratitude to the Providence that has ordered my footsteps.

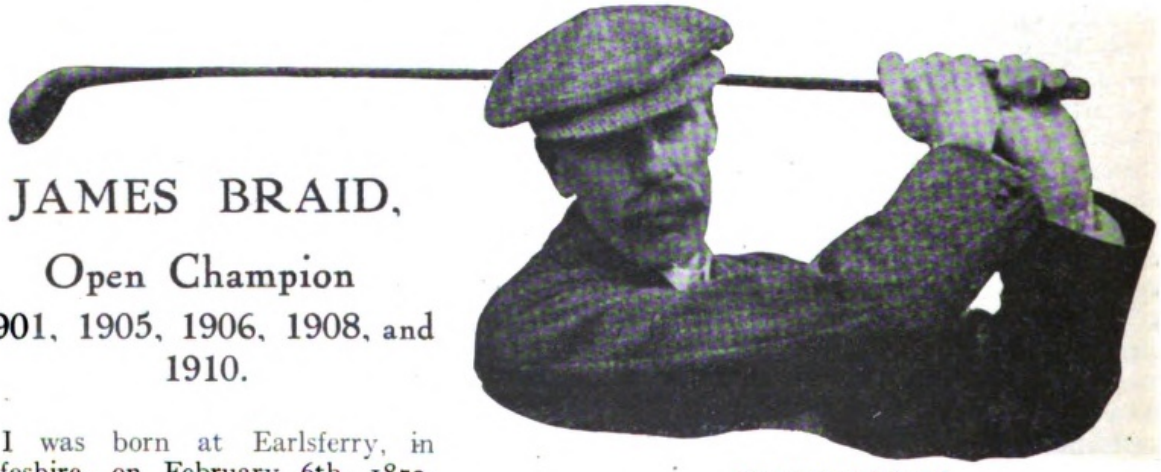


*Photo. by Sport & General.*

# JAMES BRAID,

## Open Champion

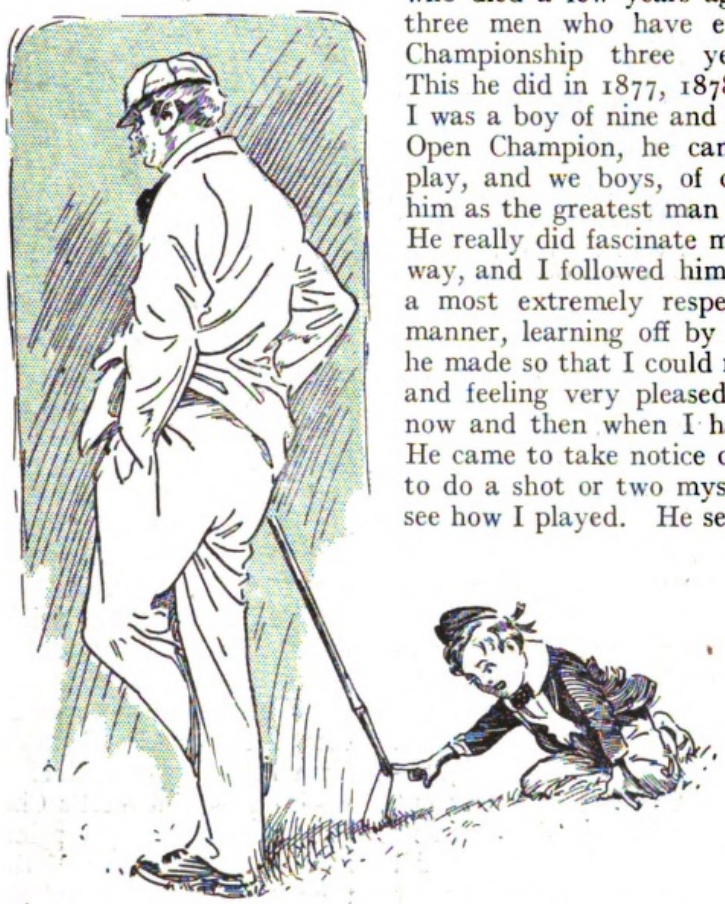
### 1901, 1905, 1906, 1908, and 1910.

I was born at Earlsferry, in Fifeshire, on February 6th, 1870, and it happened to be a Sunday. There is golf and hardly anything but golf in that part of the world. There are links everywhere. There is fine golf at Earlsferry itself, a little way north is St. Andrews, not far west is Leven, and so the country is thick with golf, and little wonder that those who do not play are regarded as strange and whimsical exceptions to a good general rule. As soon as the children begin to walk they try to hit a stone with a stick. This is the golfing instinct asserting itself, and as soon as can be the stick is changed for a club and the stone for a golf-ball. Probably my own first efforts in this direction were made with a stick and a stone.

The first thing I can positively remember—and that memory is rather vague—is of running about outside my parents' house with a miniature golf-club in my hand and knocking a ball with it at every opportunity. I began to go to the Board School at Earlsferry, and my parents not being too well off in life I acted as a caddie during the holidays, and filled up other spare time in this way as well, as so many others of the small Earlsferry boys did.

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When there were no visitors, and I had no employment as a caddie, I spent most of my spare time in practising the game. I cannot help thinking that much of this early practice was done on very good lines, because I would practise at all kinds of shots, watch the best players I could, and copy them as well as I was able. I had only an odd club or two, and my driver usually consisted of an old head that I picked up somewhere, one that had been thrown away as useless, and a shaft that had been discarded in the same way, and these I would fix up together myself. The only other club that I and the other caddies ever boasted of was usually a cleek with a long and well-lofted head. I never had any lessons; I simply watched and copied.



"I WAS VERY PLEASED TO TOUCH HIS CLUBS NOW AND THEN WHEN I HAD THE OPPORTUNITY."

The visitors to Earlsferry gave a prize every year for competition among the caddies, and when I was only eight years of age I played in the junior section of this competition for the first time, the test being score play over nine holes, the three that there happened to be in Melon Park being played over three times. I won with twenty strokes to spare, which was a good start, my score being fifty-four. Even so early I found I could reach the green in three shots at the long holes, and nobody could get there in less than two. Among the caddies were some like the Simpsons, who afterwards gained much distinction in professional golf. I won the caddies' competition three times out of four, being second to Archie Simpson on the other occasion, playing in the seniors' section the last three times.

At that early stage in my career I began to have dreams and ambitions, and they were greatly stimulated by some kind words that were spoken to me by one of the great golfing masters of the period. Jamie Anderson, who died a few years ago, was one of only three men who have ever won the Open Championship three years in succession. This he did in 1877, 1878, and 1879. When I was a boy of nine and he was at that time Open Champion, he came to Earlsferry to play, and we boys, of course, looked upon him as the greatest man who had ever lived. He really did fascinate me in a very peculiar way, and I followed him round the links in a most extremely respectful and admiring manner, learning off by heart every remark he made so that I could repeat it afterwards, and feeling very pleased to touch his clubs now and then when I had the opportunity. He came to take notice of me, and asked me to do a shot or two myself so that he could see how I played. He seemed interested and asked me to repeat some of them. I must have impressed him to some extent, for at length he patted me on the shoulder, told me to get as much golf as I could and practise extensively, and one day I should be Open Champion too.

When I was thirteen years old I left school, and though I very much wished to earn my living on the golf-links my parents would not hear of such a thing, for golf had not the same good name among people of the working class in those days as it has now. To get one's living, or a sort of living, on the links was not a very glorious thing. Consequently I was apprenticed to a joiner at a shop in the village of Colinsburgh, which is about three miles from Earlsferry. This distance had to be walked every morning and evening, work starting at seven o'clock in the morning and finishing at six o'clock at night. Sometimes I had much farther to go if working on a job "outside," so there was not much leisure time for sports of any kind except on Saturday afternoons and the long summer evenings, this spare time being usually spent in golfing. I joined the local Thistle Golf Club when I was fifteen years of age, and won many

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prizes in the competitions which it held. I was playing a very useful game at seventeen, and by this time was not only down to scratch but won a scratch medal and broke the record of the course, which by now consisted of eleven holes.

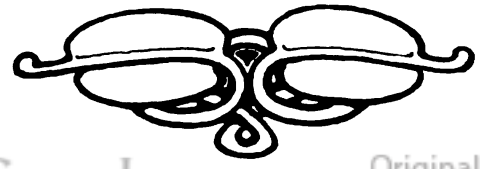
So far, however, I had little thought of a golfing future. It seemed that I was settling down to being a joiner, though one time something happened which nearly disposed of James Braid for everything on earth. I was working one day on the roof of a house, and it came on to rain, with the result that everything on that roof was very slippery. I slid along the boards and went over the side of the house, but as I was falling I caught myself on the wall. So neither neck nor bones were broken, but I sprained myself so severely that I was laid up for about six weeks, inflammation setting in.

During the period of my apprenticeship my wages were half a crown per week for the first year, rising to five shillings and sixpence in my fourth year. Afterwards, for some eight or nine months before I left, they were a pound a week. I wished to gain more experience, so I went away to Edinburgh and tried to get work there, but work at that time was scarce, and after being there a week without getting anything to do I returned home and was out for another fortnight—fortunately the longest time I was ever out of work as a joiner. Seeing an advertisement in a weekly paper for some hands at a small village about nine or ten miles away, I went there immediately, and luckily secured the job, which lasted some months. From there I went to St. Andrews and worked with two different firms, one of which was building some large mansions in different parts of Scotland, and I was sent to work on one at Melrose for some months, the difficulty in such places being to find lodgings at a reasonable distance. Our chief amusement in the evenings was playing quoits, and on Saturday afternoons we played golf on the Melrose course at the foot of the Eildon Hills. From there I was sent on to another job at North Berwick for a few weeks, when it was all golf in the evenings.

Then I went to Cardoness, in Kirkcudbrightshire, this place being seven or eight miles from the nearest station, called Dromore, while the nearest village, Gatehouse, was some three miles away. I had to lodge at this village, walking to and fro, morning and evening. Curiously, I had a letter a little while since asking me to go and lay out a golf-course there, and I am sorry that, owing to other engagements, I could not do so. On finishing at Cardoness I went back to St. Andrews, and was there some twelve months, the chief recreation, of course, being golf, which was played by most of the men in the shop. Next I went to Edinburgh for about two years, being employed by two different masters, and, luckily, was only two days out of work between finishing with one and starting with another. I was, and am still, of opinion that I secured this job through my proficiency in golf. The foreman, I know, had refused a number of men before I applied, and, although I had not the pleasure of knowing him then, I am certain he knew who I was, and I am proud to say he is one of my best friends to-day.

My last two jobs as a joiner were upon the Caledonian Railway Station and St. Cuthbert's Church, Edinburgh. For the second time there seemed to be a mild attempt on the part of the evil spirits to prevent me from becoming a golf champion. I was at work on St. Cuthbert's Church, and we were putting up the heavy principals to carry the roof when the chain of the crane by which they were being hoisted slipped, and if that chain had not stood the severe strain as it could hardly have been expected to do, there would have been no golf championships for me and no description of these wanderings as a joiner from place to place before at last I found out my real occupation in life.

Soon after this incident I came to London as a golf-club maker at the Army and Navy Stores, and remained there about two years. Since then I have been engaged as a professional golfer, and at the present time am happy in holding that position to the well-known Walton Heath Golf Club. Eight years after I came to London I won the Open Championship for the first time.



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# The Gibraltar Tunnel

by

## JEAN JAUBERT

Translated by Ethel Christian.

*Illustrated by* THOMAS SOMERFIELD

"HALLOA! Halloa! Are you there? Mr. Glencoe? Halloa! I am sorry to have to inform you, sir, that it is absolutely impossible to run the train. Yes, I mean the train cannot start. Why? Well, sir, to put it frankly, the tunnel's not safe. The roof seems to shake at the passing of even the light cars, and at about the tenth mile the roof is dripping water like a rain-storm. My confidential reports of yesterday and the day before warned you as to the state of the tunnel. But, indeed, it is *not* merely natural moisture. Down there, just now, it was like a thunder-storm. Indeed, sir, I realize perfectly that the opening of the tunnel has already been put off a week. Circumstances have been too strong for us. The reports that have got about are certainly regrettable. But surely we can't risk a catastrophe to put a stop to them! Yes, yes, yes; I am absolutely convinced there is danger, sir, very grave danger. What! Afraid? I? Of course, you're joking. But remember I have warned you!"

Hanging up the receiver with a vicious snap, the engineer of the Gibraltar Tunnel Railway Company, Mr. James Harward, very young, very intelligent, with a great air of decision about him, left the telephone in disgust. "The shares are falling on 'Change," he muttered, with a slight shrug, "and so at all costs the run must be made. Well, we shall see what we shall see!"

Banging the door after him, he left his office.

This was at Ceuta in the days when the great Gibraltar Tunnel was only just finished.

After the proved success of the tunnel under the English Channel, this new project of linking up Europe with Africa had been received with enthusiasm. With the trans-Saharan railways and the great English line from Cairo to the Cape already completed, this tunnel would supply the last link in the great chain of railways, and henceforth a journey could be made on dry land from the South of England to the Cape of Good Hope.

On every side the enterprise found supporters; the Gibraltar Tunnel Railway Company was formed, and the work of constructing the under-sea tunnel commenced. Unfortunately, the conditions here proved less favourable than in the Dover-Calais Tunnel; the ground—friable and unstable—lent itself but ill to the work of the excavators and masons. Innumerable and unforeseen difficulties had to be met and overcome, and the work was in consequence delayed, the opening of the tunnel put off, and by the time the day of its sensational inauguration dawned all sorts of sinister rumours were afloat as to the solidity of the foundations.


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James Harward, in the meantime, had reached the electric train which was to make the first run through the new tunnel. The platform, decorated with flags, garlands, and the English and Spanish colours intertwined, was packed with a laughing, chattering, excited crowd of fashionable guests.

For the company had wished to make this opening function as gay and brilliant as possible, by way of reply to the insidious calumnies which had been put about. The train was made up from the splendid and heavy rolling-stock of the Compagnie Internationale des Grands Express Européens, and was composed entirely of magnificent restaurant-cars. The run through the tunnel was to be occupied by taking lunch.

While awaiting the signal for departure the guests strolled about, exchanging gay remarks as to the construction of the wonderful tunnel and the rosy future of the company. The engineer, making his way through this crowd, was recognized and greeted here and there. But his thoughts were not gay; not that he feared for himself—such a thought never entered his mind. But he hesitated to involve all these people in a journey which he feared might be fraught with perils. The very uncertainty of the situation seemed to him terrible. When his misgivings arose he had thought it his duty to warn his chief, hoping against hope that Mr. Glencoe would go thoroughly into the matter and realize the situation, and yet he knew his man. Since the day when the actual construction of the tunnel had been completed, and the gallery handed over to the electricians to install the electric equipment, the managing director had ceased to evince any interest in the work of the contractors beyond its speedy completion; and now he answered the engineer's cry of warning with financial considerations. Mr. Glencoe was blinded by the prices on the Stock Exchange; for him nothing else mattered, nothing else existed.

James Harward reached the motor-coach, and at the mere sight of that powerful low chassis, of the burnished copper and gleaming panels, on which glistened the monogram of the company, his confidence returned a little. After all, was he not, perhaps, exaggerating the insecurity of the work? The light trial trains had passed through daily without mishap; was it not possible the gallery would, after all, bear even the far heavier load of the train-de-luxe? After all, coaches had already come through from Europe; one by one, and slowly, it is true. Perhaps his fears were groundless, mere chimeras of an over-anxious brain.

Meanwhile the time arranged for the start had arrived and the guests, warned by the sharp whirring of an electric bell, stepped into the cars and installed themselves comfortably in arm-chairs. The only people left on the platform were the officials of the works on the African side and a few members of the European colony at Ceuta.

The train was on the point of starting when two ladies appeared in a whirl of hurry.

"Quick, Blanche!" cried the elder of the two; "do make haste, or we shall be left behind."

"Oh, mamma," replied the other, an exquisite girl, tall and brown-haired, "they will surely wait for us a moment."

Respectfully the officials hastened forward; the ladies were Mrs. and Miss Glencoe, the wife and daughter of the managing director, both of whom had been staying at Ceuta during the last fortnight. Mrs. Glencoe had suddenly decided to make the journey, principally owing to the girl's entreaties to take part in the inauguration trip and at the same time pay a surprise visit to Mr. Glencoe.

And now the train had nearly gone without them!

James, bending over the motor, listening for the guard's "All right," suddenly started erect at the sight of the two figures flitting quickly across his vision towards the cars. Terror gripped him by the throat. What! Miss Glencoe on the train! Was her father mad to allow such a folly?—or were the warnings of his engineer looked upon as valueless—mere croakings?

James had no time to unravel the question, for at that moment the signal was given and the mechanician, sitting alert and rigid, pulled the starting-lever back to the first stop. The train glided out of the station.

For several hundred yards the line ran along the top of the cliff overhanging the calm and treacherous sea. Then the train ran gently down a slight incline and a moment after plunged beneath the mountain: they were in the tunnel. Here the steep downgrade began abruptly, and the mechanician brought the lever back to zero; no power was needed; at each moment the train gained greater speed from its own momentum.

Erect, silent, alert, James Harward stood watching the line surge up out of the blackness into the brilliant glare of the train's electric lights. For twenty miles the tunnel extended beneath the sea, for twenty miles this agony of mind must endure before the blessed light of day was reached in Algeciras. Above and on each side the monotonous grey of the

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"HE SUDDENLY STARTED ERECT AT THE SIGHT OF TWO FIGURES FLITTING QUICKLY ACROSS HIS VISION TOWARDS THE CARS."

cemented walls; below, the two gleaming rails for ever seeking to rejoin each other in the far-distant obscurity. On one side, a little distance from the ground, ran a third rail, the "live" rail supplying power to the motors and brilliance to the clustered lamps, and the single telephone wire—the only bond between the living world above and the train rushing through this immensity of blackness.

James Harward knew his tunnel well. As far as the sixth mile it was fairly dry, for the ground here was less permeable, and the two large ducts, on either side of the line, intended for the draining off of the infiltrations, only carried down an insignificant trickle to the middle of the tunnel—the lowest point—where the water, by means of transverse galleries, was conveyed to the powerful pumps situated on firm ground.

The train sped along evenly. Nothing out of the way was likely to occur just yet.

Obeying some uncontrollable impulse, James left the observation-car and made his way to the saloons where the guests were congregated, and where one guest in particular acted as a magnet to the engineer.

In the cars, brilliant with light, lunch was in full swing, and champagne was flowing freely. The gaiety of the inauguration, noisy and a little artificial, was little by little drowning the steady "thrum-thrum" of the wheels. Anxious, busy waiters swarmed everywhere.

Seated at a table by themselves, Mrs. Glencoe and her daughter talked in low tones. As James Harward passed them with a courteous bow, which he strove to render indifferent, Mrs. Glencoe called to him gently.

"Mr. Harward."

The engineer pulled up short. His heart beat rapidly.

"Yes, Mrs. Glencoe?"

"How soon shall we reach Algeciras?"

"In—in—oh, in about half an hour, I should think. Yes, in about half an hour," he repeated, with decision. "Mr. Glencoe is doubtless expecting you?"

"Oh, no; he doesn't know we're on the train," cried the young girl. "We want to give him a pleasant surprise."

"Ah!"

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James Harward withdrew, his mind full of a lovely vision. With her slim figure, her exquisite, dark face, her merry smile and deep yet roguish eyes, Blanche Glencoe was not at all of the Anglo-Saxon type. Rather did she remind one of the lovely women of the South. Her mother, indeed, was Italian.

In this moment of enchantment all his anxieties, his doubts, his fears, returned to the young engineer with redoubled force. He took his seat beside the motor-man.

If only the journey were accomplished without mishap! A few hours earlier he had looked the risk in the face calmly, even with a certain professional indifference. Now that he knew Miss Glencoe to be on board his whole being revolted at the thought of a possible accident. His heart throbbed heavily; he loved this girl Blanche! He had never realized it fully till that moment when she flitted across the platform to enter the train; then his powerful emotion had flashed the searchlight of truth to the very depths of his soul.

At their first meeting Blanche Glencoe had made a deep impression on him, but he told himself it was only the artist in him which worshipped at the shrine of her tender beauty; this, he thought, was admiration—respectful admiration, not love. And so, little by little, all unconsciously, he had become love's bondsman. Always her image had been before his eyes and in his heart. And Blanche? Was it folly, he asked himself, to imagine she might reciprocate his affection? He tried to call to mind every little detail of her demeanour towards him which was indicative that she was not indifferent to him. Would she——

A gesture from the mechanician woke the young man out of his love dream.

The incline was now almost imperceptible. The under-sea level had been reached; the motors were running again, and under their impulsion the train rushed on swiftly and smoothly. In the walls of the tunnel the engineer caught a passing glimpse of one of the isolating-switches which were installed at certain intervals along the line, and which enabled any section of the live rail to be isolated, thus cutting off the power from any faulty section, if necessity arose.

The shrill ringing of a telephone-bell suddenly made itself heard above the thrumming of the wheels. A wire was installed above the train the whole length of the route, and a special transmitter with roller contact maintained uninterrupted communication with the telephone in the car.

"Halloa! Yes, everything's all right so far, sir. I know; I only hope you may be right all through, sir. Oh, they are enjoying themselves—very gay indeed. Why, of course, sir, you can rely on my absolute discretion. Very good, sir. Good-bye."

Harward hung up the receiver and again set himself to scrutinizing the route ahead. Already the walls were no longer dry—a little water filtered through the surface. Several isolating-switches had already been passed, and in a few minutes the lowest point in the under-sea tunnel would be reached. Here two tremendous culverts, carrying off the water which had percolated into the tunnel, descended at a steady gradient to the solid bottom strata. At the works above-ground powerful pumps, erected at the mouths of the shafts which connected with these draining-galleries, pumped the water up to the surface.

The nearer the train got to the middle of the tunnel the wetter the walls became; they streamed with water, and, as the engineer had said, a veritable rain fell from the roof and flooded the permanent-way. Under the passing of the heavy train the whole tunnel vibrated in an alarming way. The rumbling of the wheels became a hollow roar. One could well understand Harward's apprehensions; this abnormal state of things was surely the precursor of some dreadful catastrophe?

James Harward put the question to himself as he anxiously followed the flight of the miles on the indicator. Then the gradient changed; the critical point was passed. Harward breathed more freely. Soon now the European shore would be reached and the danger passed. The rain from the roof ceased and at each revolution of the wheels the damp grew less and less. All peril seemed passed, and the engineer, overjoyed, began to reproach himself for his foolish fears and to feel rather sheepish at having voiced them to Mr. Glencoe. Oh, well, everything was going all right, so what did it matter?

Then suddenly the electric lights flickered for a moment and went out. The humming of the motors ceased and the speed slackened. In a black obscurity, which was only emphasized by the feeble flicker of the hastily-lighted emergency lamps, two hundred yards below the level of the sea, and nearly eight miles from the tunnel's mouth, the Gibraltar Tunnel Express came to a standstill.

In the power-house at Algeciras the chief electrical engineer, with a curious look on his face, stood at the ammeter and noted the

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registration of the current absorbed by the train. A foreman approached him.

"Well, what is it?" asked the engineer.

"The delivery of water from the pumps has increased tremendously since this morning, sir. We must put on more pressure at once."

"I'll come and see."

The two men went towards the shaft. A special gauge registered the level of the water at the bottom. At the moment it registered two hundred and fifteen yards below the level of the sea.

"Hardly fifteen yards below the floor of the tunnel," said the engineer. "We must reduce that at once."*

The motor of the pump thrummed a little more, but still, slowly, the level rose instead of decreasing. The engineer knitted his brows.

"Get the emergency pump running," he ordered, "and put her at full pressure."

A second thrumming joined itself to the first, and the delivery of water was doubled; the level ebbed little by little, and the engineer went back to the power indicator.

What was this that met his gaze? It was impossible! The electric consumption had suddenly increased tenfold! No, he was making no mistake; overloaded, the machines behind him were slackening. The engineer flung himself towards the tunnel telephone. Mr. Glencoe already had the receiver in his hand.

"Halloa! Halloa! What's wrong? How do you mean 'nothing'? No damage? You are in darkness? But there is no interruption of the current here with us; the machines are delivering six thousand amperes. You have no current on the train? But how can that be when we're sending you plenty?"

At this moment the foreman ran in, his face expressive of dismay.

"Sir! The level!"

"What now?"

"It is one hundred and ninety-eight yards."

"What! It was at two hundred and fifteen a moment ago!"

"It has suddenly risen. In less than a quarter of an hour! The pumps are flooded."

"But—then—the line is flooded, too!" cried the director, overwhelmed.

"And the third rail is short-circuited by the sea-water," added the engineer, curtly.

The silence of tragedy descended on the three men.

"At all costs we must send them some current," said the managing director, after a moment. "Start the stand-by machines, and at full pressure."

The engineer went off to carry out the order, the while Mr. Glencoe and the foreman hurried towards the pumps. Arrived there a cry of horror broke from their lips; the level was at one hundred and seventy-five yards; twenty-five yards higher than the floor of the tunnel at its lowest point.

James Harward had no need to telephone in order to follow the march of events; his fears had been realized. Under the weight of the train fissures had been produced in the tunnel, and through the unstable ground enclosing it the sea was now inexorably making its way—in little trickles at first—but every moment the volume increased and the danger grew. First the draining-gallery was swamped, then the water crept up to the rails; and now the sea-water connected the third rail with the other two and a short circuit was the result; the current supplied from the generating-station to the third rail came back to the works through the sea-water, without coming into contact with the now silent motors of the train.

The water was rising now at a terrifying rate. There was no time for the passengers to save themselves on foot.

Fortunately Harward did not lose his head. He had been nervous and fidgety under the apprehension of a possible accident, but now that a tangible catastrophe had to be faced he was calm, cool, and collected. To save the train and restore the current, the short circuit had to be rectified; the only way to obtain this result was by isolating the submerged portion of the rails from the rest of the line. Just before the train had come to a standstill they had passed one of the section isolating-switches; he must go back to it and by breaking the contact cut off the current's escape to the water, and thus re-establish the normal circuit with the motors of the train.

The engineer jumped on to the line, and immediately the frightened passengers began to imitate him.

"Keep your seats! Keep your seats!" Harward cried.

But as the guests, huddled together in the uncertain light, seemed little inclined to listen to him he had to stop and parley with them, wasting precious moments—moments that seemed to him centuries, knowing as he did that down there in the dip of the line the sea continued its resistless invasion.

*The floor of the tunnel is two hundred yards below the sea-level, and from it branch the drain-galleries running to the shafts, which are still lower; the level of the water in these shafts and galleries must always be more than two hundred yards from the surface of the sea, in order to be lower than the permanent-way. An identical disposition exists in the actual plans for a Channel tunnel.

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"'TELL ME THE TRUTH,' SHE WHISPERED, IN A GENTLE VOICE. 'FOR MY MOTHER'S SAKE,' SHE ADDED, LIFTING CLASPED HANDS IMPLORINGLY TO HARWARD."

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"There is not the slightest danger," he told them in a firm, pleasant voice. "No danger at all. We shall be off again in a minute or two. Get back to the carriages, please."

In the shadows a figure glided to his side. Harward quivered from head to foot as he felt rather than saw that it was Blanche Glencoe.

"Tell me the truth," she whispered, in a gentle voice. "For my mother's sake," she added, lifting clasped hands imploringly to Harward.

"Tell Mrs. Glencoe there is no danger," said the engineer, firmly. "And remember, stay in the saloon, whatever happens; your safety may depend on it," he added, almost in a whisper.

The girl lifted her eyes to his, and for a long second they seemed to look deep into each other's souls. Deeply moved, the man bent his head and with a gesture urged her to re-enter the train; and Miss Glencoe, lightly resting her fingers on his arm, mounted the step. This slight contact with the woman he loved unmanned him more than the terrifying emergency he had to contend with.

The fears of the passengers had been calmed and they went quietly back into the saloons and shut the doors, all of them quite unaware of their terrible danger, and quite satisfied with the engineer's assurances that all was well. Now they made jokes at the expense of the company. All fear of a panic was over, and Harward was at last free to race back into the blackness of the tunnel to the isolating-switch, which he knew was a hundred yards or so in the rear.

The farther he got from the train the more clearly came to his ears a humming sound, hollow and indistinct. By the time he reached the isolating-switch the humming had become a roar—deep, rumbling, menacing. The engineer understood; it was the roar of the sea, still a long way off, but advancing steadily, always advancing to claim its prey. And now an acrid smell, still almost imperceptible, tainted the heavy atmosphere of the tunnel; it made Harward cough. What could it be? A stronger whiff dissipated his doubts. It was the unmistakable odour of chlorine! But then—how? Yes! that was it, of course; the electric current running through the sea-water decomposed it and chlorine was thus liberated, and this terrible asphyxiating gas was diffusing itself through the tunnel.

Feverishly Harward manipulated the apparatus. Immediately the lights reappeared on the train; the current, now cut off from the sea, was restored. Running as fast as he could the engineer regained the train, and in a moment they were going full-speed ahead.

Was this salvation? Earnestly James hoped so. Behind the train the sea was steadily creeping up; before long the section on which the train was running would be immersed, there would be another short circuit, the sea would again absorb the current. "We must manage to get off this section and then isolate it before the fatal moment when the sea reaches it," thought Harward. But the next isolating-switch was at the sixteenth mile, over three miles distant, and the sea even now was gaining, gaining, gaining! It was almost on them. They could never do it! Even at full speed they could never do it! And there was nothing to be done—nothing! The motor-man had the lever in the last notch; the speed now depended on the power-house above. Ah, perhaps there was a ray of hope there! Harward unhooked the receiver.

"Yes, we are running. We managed to cut off the damaged section. But we are not making enough speed. Can you raise the voltage? Yes, every ounce of power you can manage. If the sea reaches us we're done for. That's it. Not a moment to lose. What's that? No, the passengers don't guess anything's wrong. For a moment, yes, there was the beginning of a panic. I was able to reassure them. Halloa! Mr. Glencoe is there, you say? Yes? Well, tell him that Mrs. Glencoe and his daughter are on the train. Good-bye."

Harward hung up the receiver. Almost at once the lamps burned more brilliantly, the humming of the motors increased; the works were sending more power. The train, like a sentient thing, seemed to make a last effort to escape its implacable pursuer, hurling itself forward on its mad race to safety.

Overjoyed, Harward noted the flight of the miles—thirteen, fourteen, fifteen; a few more moments and the menaced section would be left behind; a few more revolutions of the wheels——

Then his blood seemed to freeze and a cold sweat broke out on his forehead. The lights were going down!

For the second time the lamps went out and the train was plunged in darkness. For a second time the motors were silenced.

One glimmer of hope remained to James and the mechanician; perhaps their own momentum would carry them off this cursed section. Very slowly they glided towards the sixteenth mile-mark, and then the two

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men had to renounce this last hope. The wheels, with a grinding noise, ceased to revolve. Again the sea had vanquished the man, again the train was in dire peril.

What was to be done? There were no means here of isolating the rail behind the train; the tremendous current which the power-house was supplying flowed into the treacherous water, while the train, immobile for want of that wasted current, seemed to wait the coming of the sea—the coming of death.

Dismayed, the engineer and the motor-man looked at each other helplessly. A sudden clamour roused them from their speechless contemplation of the calamity. The passengers, now thoroughly alarmed, were demanding explanations. Some of them, wild with fear, wanted to escape along the tunnel on foot.

"It is four miles from here to the tunnel-end," said the engineer.

"Well, what of it? That's only a short walk. One can easily do that."

"You won't have time to do it," replied Harward.

"What do you mean? Not time? What threatens us?"

"Is it fire?" cried one.

"Is the roof giving way?" gasped another.

"What is it? What's the danger? What do you fear? Tell us! Speak—speak!"

Harward remained silent. Rage at his impotence was shaking him as with an ague. The circle of faces closed in on him, pressing closer. The carriages were almost emptied; panic-stricken, the passengers crowded on to the line. Their cries filled the tunnel, echoing and re-echoing strangely along the dark roof.

"*Will* you say what the danger is?" someone shouted.

"The sea," Harward said, grimly, at last.

"The sea!"

For a moment silence fell on the crowd. Then the frightened questions recommenced, and the engineer explained the situation to them. The guests grew pale. Harward, himself pallid from the strain, clenched his fists in an agonized effort to think out a way of escape. There was none! None! There was absolutely nothing to be done. Must they die here like rats in a sewer? Alas! what miracle could give power to the motors lying there inert?

Then suddenly the too-well-known odour floated again to his nostrils. Denser, thicker than at the first stop, the fumes of chlorine swept up, poisoning the air, tickling the throats of the victims it would soon suffocate. The cup of horror was full and running over.

Instinctively obeying James Harward's order, the terrified passengers returned to the carriages and the doors and windows were tightly shut. Alas! was it not merely putting off the final catastrophe?

At this moment Blanche Glencoe touched Harward's arm.

"Mr. Harward," she murmured, in a low, firm voice, "is there no chance for us? Is there no hope?"

Harward gently shook his head. He could not speak just then. The girl understood the hopelessness of the gesture.

"It is the end, then?" went on the girl, as she drew nearer to him. "We must wait here for death." And, as the man still made no reply, Blanche tenderly took his hands in hers. "James," she whispered, creeping still closer to him, "I can tell you, as we are going to die. James, I have always loved you."

Harward bent his head. Blushingly the girl leant her forehead against his shoulder.

"I love you, James. It is a consolation that we can at least die together."

The sense of inevitable doom had filled the engineer with rage and shame; rage with fate, shame at his own impotence. Now the girl's words added revolt to his other feelings.

"No!" he cried, with kindling eyes. "No, you shall not die, my darling. I have an idea. We'll get out of this yet." And almost roughly he hurried the girl into the last car.

Springing into the observation-car, he bent over the tool-box and drew out a heavy hammer; then, running like one possessed, he disappeared down the line, and was swallowed up in the darkness of that suffocating atmosphere.

The third rail ran along the line at the side. By the light of a torch the engineer searched out a joint between two lengths of rail; having found one, he placed his torch on the ground. Then, though hardly able to breathe in the awful atmosphere, he raised the sledge-hammer and dealt the joint a mighty blow. Panting for breath, again and again he swung the hammer in both hands, striking the rail with herculean strength; he was pitting himself against the elements for the girl he loved.

The joint resisted. Another mighty blow, and something gave way; a splinter flew; another—and the massive piece of steel was dislocated from its support. One more prodigious, superhuman effort, and a large rent appeared in the rail. But the electric current, thus rudely broken, flared into a roaring arc of flame whose crashing noise echoed terrifyingly down the gallery.

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Confused and blinded, Harward fell back. Denser than ever the invading gas swept up, extinguishing the torch. James Harward's body disappeared in unfathomable darkness.

Algeciras awaited the coming of the train. This was a great day for the town. The front of every house was decorated; on stately public buildings and humble private houses flags flew and rustled gaily in the wind. In the bay, gay awnings flaunted on slender yachts and spread themselves gaily over the decks of the more bulky steamers. A great crowd, all got up in their Sunday best, strolled leisurely about the streets. But the greatest interest centred round the magnificently-decorated Tunnel Station and the works and offices of the Gibraltar Tunnel Railway. Here the



"CONFUSED AND BLINDED, HARWARD FELL BACK."



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crowd was thickest; here it was excited and impatient. Within, the high officials of the company entertained the *haute monde* of the town. The crown of completion and success was to be placed on this immense undertaking; the first train from Africa, running through the Gibraltar Tunnel, was about to arrive!

At first the official bulletins of the train's progress created tremendous enthusiasm and kept the people amused. But now there had been no news for some time. The managing director had disappeared. The chief engineer of works, but lately so assiduous in his attentions to the ladies, was not to be found. Only the small fry of officialdom were left, and all they could say was that the train would arrive to time.

"No news is good news," said a youthful electrician, swaggeringly conscious of his brand-new cap of office, addressing a journalist.

"But why have they stopped telephoning?"

"They have nothing to say, I suppose."

"Lopez," interrupted the chief electrician, "get to the power-house—quick!"

The journalist's ears were pricked and he addressed himself to the chief.

"Any fresh news, sir?" he asked, with an amiable air of innocent interest.

"No—oh, no—none," was the reply. "All the engines must be got to work, that's all."

He moved off.

"That's *all!*" murmured the reporter. "I think this is worth looking into."

He went towards the power-house. No *employés* lounged about the door now. A glance inside discovered to the reporter an abnormal activity. Something was evidently wrong. In one corner the high officials of the company were discussing something excitedly. On tip-toe the reporter approached them.

"Train at a standstill again—lost!—level rising—unheard of!—engines overloaded—delay—catastrophe!"

The journalist withdrew and made for the telegraph-office. On reading his message the telegraphist looked scared. A few moments later all Algeciras knew that the Gibraltar Tunnel Express was for ever entombed at the bottom of the tunnel!

Then a clamour broke out—the ferocious and yet lugubrious howling of a Southern crowd in face of death. They charged the works; the barriers went down, the gates flew into a thousand pieces. The crowd hurled itself against the walls of the power-house, excited, despairing, mad, wildly demanding details.

"News! News! Give us news!"

Mr. Glencoe, pale and anxious, appeared at a window. Silence fell—a deathly silence.

"The train has started again," he announced. "The delay was only momentary and of no grave importance. The train will be in the station in a quarter of an hour."

And now mad joy took the place of rage and despair; joyful cries, hurrahs, replaced the cries of woe. The surging crowd gave themselves up to wild exultation, mad rejoicing; they surged backwards and forwards, yelling, laughing, shrieking, even sobbing out their relief.

But all too soon apprehension returned, bruising hope and darkening the world. Sinister rumours spread among the people. Again arose the cry for news, news, news!

The managing director did not appear again.

A wave of despair surged over the crowd. The train had again come to a standstill in the bowels of the earth. Why?

"News! News! Give us news!"

The cry became insistent, menacing.

A man appeared and tried to make himself heard.

"The telephone is no longer working!"

The last link connecting the doomed train with the world above-ground was broken!

Then madness seized the people. Some wave of impulse turned them away from the now useless works and flung them in a headlong stampede towards the mouth of the tunnel. Gathered there they regarded the yawning aperture with haggard, resentful eyes, as if waiting for it to reveal the drama which was being enacted below, as if the despair of the living might succour the unfortunate victims of disaster.

At this moment the air in front of the tunnel became a little foggy and a slight smoke issued from the mouth, rolling slowly out on a level with the ground. Then the volume increased and grew thicker, and it was seen to be of a greenish hue. The first ranks of the crowd fell back, choking, on their fellows. Terror overwhelmed their bodies, agony of mind gripped their souls.

"Sulphur!" whispered the people, with a shiver of superstition. "Sulphur!"

It was *chlorine!*

The shrill cries of women, the sobs of bereaved mothers, sounded for an instant above the hoarse clamour of the mob. And above the sun shone brilliantly from an unclouded vault of deepest, loveliest blue. A soft sea-breeze gently swayed the flags and flowers, the great steamers and graceful yachts swung peacefully at their moorings, while little boats skimmed lightly over the sparkling

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wavelets under the burden of their snowy sails, symbols of peace, of calm, and of prosperity.

In the works anxiety was extreme; the very air was tense with the strivings of men and machinery. Mr. Morton, the chief electrician, was engrossed in his dynamos, which were running at full pressure, overloaded in the endeavour to supply the torrents of electricity demanded by the train below. Apprehensions as to his precious plant diverted his mind somewhat from the possibly imminent catastrophe. The chief engineer of works, Mr. Harlow, in a fury of rage at his own impotence, stormed up and down, cursing the elements, the treacherous soil, and the invading sea, which he had thought to hold in leash.

Mr. Glencoe had completely broken down. It had become second nature to him to give orders and have them blindly obeyed, to impose his will on everyone, to insist that he knew best on every subject, technical as well as financial. All must bend before his will. A latent antagonism, a secret resentment, had divided him from his staff, and more especially from James Harward, who would not always admit the director-manager's omniscience. Now, in the hour of danger, Mr. Glencoe's authority seemed to fall from him; he had no suggestions to make, no orders to impose to-day.

Returned from the telegraph-office, the prying reporter set himself to fathom the tragic problem, to find out the exact circumstances of the catastrophe. He prowled about, waiting on chance and scanning the faces of the officials.

At this moment the news was brought that the tunnel was vomiting forth torrents of chlorine.

"The current has electrified the sea-water," said the electrician. "Those poor people below will be asphyxiated."

"Hadn't we better stop the dynamos?" put in Mr. Harlow.

The managing director was silent. The journalist addressed him sharply.

"Are you going to do nothing? Are you not even going to attempt anything? Surely something—something can be done! Are you made of stone? Or don't you care? Think—think of those unfortunate people! Ah, it is easy to see *you* are not one of them!"

"My wife and daughter are in the doomed train," Mr. Glencoe replied, in a strangled voice.

The reporter bowed his head.

"Forgive me, sir," he said, after a moment, speaking now in a gentler voice. "But can nothing be done? Can't someone go down into the tunnel?"

"The shaft indicator shows the water to be less than four miles from the mouth," replied Mr. Morton. "It would take an hour and a half to walk it; and in a quarter of an hour all will be over. Besides, even if there was time, the chlorine would not allow of our reaching them."

"Is it the electricity that produces the chlorine?"

"Yes."

"Well, switch off the current."

"How is one to decide!" burst out the managing director, in agonized tones. "If we don't switch out, every soul will be asphyxiated; if we *do*, we destroy the train's last chance of salvation."

A heavy silence fell upon the little knot of men. There was nothing to be done. The situation was beyond their control. Unable to bear the tension, one by one they rose and silently left the power-house, making a melancholy little procession in the direction of the tunnel-mouth.

The chlorine was now belching out in huge greenish volumes, driving back the mob. Surely no one could exist down there in such an atmosphere!

"Suppose the passengers have left the train?" said someone.

"Perhaps they may yet escape on foot," suggested the reporter.

"Do you believe that possible?" asked the engineer.

"Anyway, I think the current ought to be switched out."

"Yes, cut the current! Stop the current!" Some voices in the crowd took up the cry. "Switch it off! Switch it off!"

"Perhaps—yes," acquiesced the managing director. He turned to go towards the works.

At this moment enormous waves of chlorine burst from the tunnel, as if driven out by some hidden force, and a dull, rumbling sound could be heard; louder, louder it grew, till the earth shook with its reverberating clamour, and at a hundred miles an hour the menaced train crashed out of the tunnel!

At that moment the current was switched off.

The train gradually lost its momentum and came to a standstill, revealing this dreadful spectacle. There, on the driving-seat, still gripping the lever back to the last notch, a dead man sat, his face horribly contorted in

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"A DULL, RUMBLING SOUND COULD BE HEARD; LOUDER, LOUDER IT GREW, TILL THE EARTH SHOOK CRASHED OUT OF

the last agony of asphyxiation. In death, and after death, the motor-man had done his duty!

Horror was written on every face. Was this, then, a train of death? Had everyone perished?

"Oh, heavens! How horrible!"

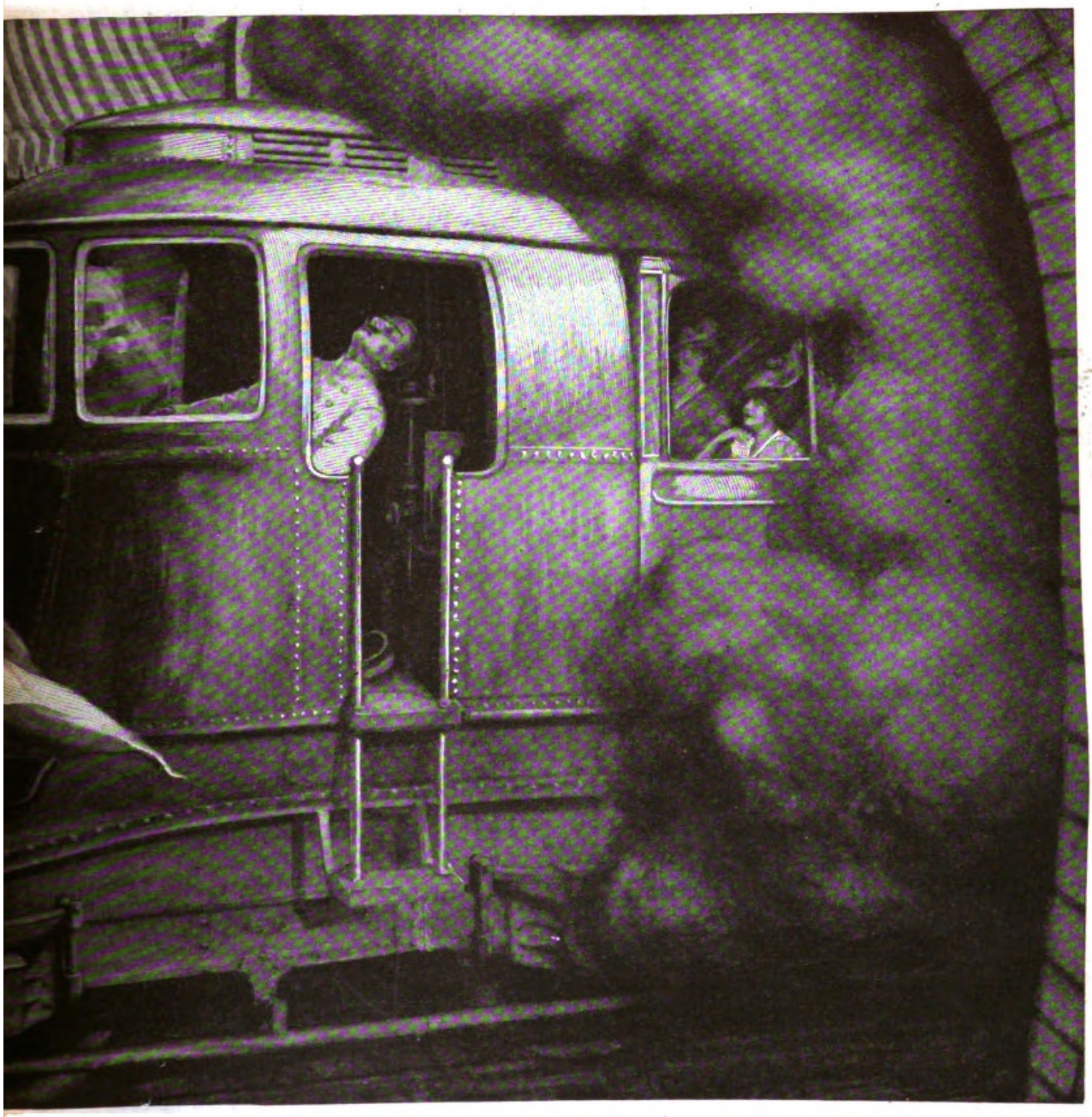
A low whimper of terror—then mad cries of joy! Men had leaped upon the footboard while the train was still running and now flung wide the doors. Inside the carriages, hermetically closed by James Harward's orders, the chlorine had failed to penetrate. The passengers were safe.

In the last carriage a man lay bleeding, his face blackened and tortured. It was the engineer whose heroic devotion had saved the train. The explosion caused by the shattering of the live rail had hurled him senseless on the line. But his men were fond of him, and one of them had run back and by the light of the flaming arc had found his chief's body. Nearly suffocated, he had just managed to hoist it into the last carriage when the train started.

Now Harward was stretched on a seat and by his side, sobbing, knelt Blanche Glencoe.

"It was for us," she murmured, in a broken voice—"for me—that he sacrificed himself, that he died."

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WITH ITS REVERBERATING CLAMOUR, AND AT A HUNDRED MILES AN HOUR THE MENACED TRAIN THE TUNNEL!"

A doctor approached and examined the engineer. With a sad gesture he replied to the girl's mute question. All was over.

With streaming eyes Blanche bent over the body of her lover and imprinted on his brow a long, long kiss—the kiss of betrothal—and adieu.

Oh, God! What was that?

Under the girl's passionate kiss a quiver seemed to run through the lifeless body. A tinge of colour crept into the white cheeks! Harward seemed to make an effort to move; his lips trembled, his lids fluttered open! Then consciousness crept into his eyes, and with it a look of ineffable happiness. He tried to raise himself, smiled at Blanche, and fell back exhausted.

"He will live," said the doctor, after another and more careful examination. And Blanche, overcome by so many emotions, fell sobbing into her father's arms.

Some months later the London-Africa Express came out of the Gibraltar Tunnel at great speed, bearing on his honeymoon trip to South Africa the new managing director of the Gibraltar Tunnel Railway Company and his charming bride, Blanche Glencoe.

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# "MY REMINISCENCES."

## By

# ARTHUR BOURCHIER.

### Illustrated by Leo Cheney.

WHEN and where I was born and how I spent my early youth seem to me to be matters of purely domestic interest, and therefore I will tactfully draw a veil over my childhood's days. It may be of interest, however, if I say that I am, as my name suggests, of French extraction, and one of my ancestors, Richard Bourchier, signed the Death Warrant of Charles I., with the somewhat unpleasant result that when Charles II. came to the throne he promptly ordered the confiscation of all the Bourchier property, land, and title.

So far as my own humble career is concerned, let me hasten to say that I was not cut out for the stage. My father promised me that if I took my degree at Oxford I should be allowed to choose my own profession, and I was wavering between the Army and the Bar when Mrs. Langtry, whom I knew personally, surprised me with the question—"Would you like to earn some money by going on the stage and joining my company?" The suggestion came as a wholesale surprise, but it none the less pleased me greatly, and I promptly accepted it. And thus, in most incidental fashion, my career was settled.

Looking back, however, I am led to believe that the stage must always have had a fascination for me. As a boy the Theatre Royal back drawing-room claimed me as the drummer-boy in "Bombastes Furioso," and later I was assisted in my histrionic attempts by George Hawtrey, then a classical tutor at Eton.

When I went up to Christ Church, Oxford, I recall that the drama was in a parlous condition. Mr. F. R. Benson, who preceded me, had pinned his faith on the severe Greek drama. But modern comedy and farces were tabooed by the dons, and, in consequence, the histrionic aspirations of young Oxford had perforce to be fostered in secret conclave, and presented more or less *sub rosa*. A performance of "Money," however, was done after an urgent appeal to the authorities, with myself as a sort of falsetto Sir John Vesey, to a bass-toned Georgina in the person of the present Lord Wolverton.

Soon after this those in power permitted performances of Shakespeare, only with ladies in the ladies' parts. We of the Philothespians prospered well under this new rule, so much so that it was my privilege to found the present Greater Oxford University Dramatic Society, which gives plays during the year in the charming Oxford Theatre, which we opened with a memorable performance of "Twelfth Night."

"The Merchant of Venice," with myself as Shylock, was my first experience of Shakespearean acting. In this play, I remember, the dons and their wives took part. Other productions were "Henry IV.," I the Hotspur, quickly followed by the Clown in "Twelfth Night," Falstaff in "The Merry Wives of Windsor," "Julius Cæsar," and Death in the Greek "Alcestis." Supporting, as we say on the stage, were Canon Scott Holland, the well-known preacher; the Hon. Canon Adderley, a busy clergyman who has done so much good work in the far end of London town, and who does not neglect the drama now that he is at St. Gabriel's, Birmingham; and Mr. W. L. Courtney, dramatist, essayist, and dramatic critic; while towards the end of my time at Oxford Harry Irving arrived, and, I need scarcely say, proved a most valuable acquisition to the amateur boards.

Mention of Harry Irving reminds me that Oxford has from time to time turned out a number of fine actors, thus proving that although, of course, it is advisable for every actor to begin young, there is no ostensible reason why a man should not proceed to the 'Varsity and yet attain success on the stage. As proof of this I need only mention that in

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addition to H. B. Irving, Holman Clark, Nigel Playfair, and the late James Hearn were all members of the Oxford University Dramatic Club.

Apart from my keen interest in theatricals, those good old Oxford times were quite red-letter days in my life, and now when I look back over the years it occurs to me that in not a few ways the habits of young men of that time differed considerably from those of the present day. And one habit in particular, that of practical joking, has, perhaps happily for many of us, gone out. Such cheerful jokes, for instance, as testing the courage of the new sub by putting him in a winding-sheet with two bulldogs and rolling the bundle down the barrack-stairs.



MR. ARTHUR BOURCHIER.

To-day it is more subtle. For instance, the same mad, waggish brain that conceived the bogus visit of a certain Oriental potentate to Dartmouth was responsible for the delicious joke of masquerading with his friends in navvy dress and digging up the entire asphalt roadway in front of the Bank of England. When the luncheon hour arrived, the busy workers left their tools and, in spite of the ghastly nuisance caused by blocking the traffic, the authorities did not discover the fraud for twenty-four hours.

Personally, as far as practical jokes go, I have once been the perpetrator, and once the spectator, of this form of humour. Early in my Oxford career I returned to find all my effects, pictures, furniture, everything, laid out in Canterbury Quad at Christ Church—even the stars on the window-pane were carefully chalked—on one of the wettest nights in an unusually rainy term.

IN "THE BISHOP'S MOVE."

Having spotted the culprits, I planned a small revenge by persuading two of them to dress up as Red Indians at a large country-house party that Christmas, promising to do the same myself. When they burst from their hiding-places, the astonishment of the rather austere house-party can be imagined. In vain did they wait for some signal from me, and their fury knew no bounds when I calmly walked down to dinner and joined with the



IN "BROTHER OFFICERS."
*Photos. by Ellis & Walery.*

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"WHEN THEY BURST FROM THEIR HIDING-PLACES, THE ASTONISHMENT OF THE RATHER AUSTERE HOUSE-PARTY CAN BE IMAGINED."

other guests in expressing astonishment at their silliness.

While writing of practical jokes, it crosses my mind that the best I ever saw was enacted during another country-house visit. A particularly mild and harmless member of the party excited the ire of the Beau Brummell amongst us by wearing what he described as an "ill-cut pink evening-coat." "If you come down in that thing again I shall rip it up from the coat-tails," said Beau Brummell. The next evening the mild one dared Beau Brummell, who promptly carried his threat into execution and tore the offending garment from seam to seam. "I thought you would," murmured the mild one, "so I got my man to change our coats."



"HE PROMPTLY CARRIED HIS THREAT INTO EXECUTION AND TORE THE OFFENDING GARMENT FROM SEAM TO SEAM."

Towards the close of my Oxford days I became associated with the Old Stagers and the Windsor Strollers, taking part in such plays as "Our Boys," "The Two Roses," "The Glass of Fashion," "London Assurance," "The Ticket-of-Leave Man," "The Parvenu," and "Confusion," and really in one way and another I found myself in the way of gaining not a little valuable experience — for which, I need scarcely say, I have ever since been eternally grateful.

Institutions of the kind I have mentioned are practically invaluable to the young actor who is in earnest,

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and who is really desirous of making headway in his profession. Unfortunately there is no stock training-school in these travelling-company days, though to no small extent, to the real "worker" with ideas and motive, the amateur club supplies a good training ground; for, as you can readily understand, the amateur gets thrust into all sorts of characters and in the course of time he should be enabled to gauge his own abilities tolerably well and the class of part for which he is best fitted. For this reason I would advise all stage aspirants to join some club of the kind, and then, afterwards, as soon as opportunity offers, go on tour and get the rough edges toned down.

I have already mentioned that it was Mrs. Langtry (who, by the way, I had known before she went on the stage) who offered me my first professional engagement. Jaques, at Wolverhampton, the town hallowed by the memory of John Kemble and Mrs. Siddons, was my first venture, while during the tour I appeared in "Esther Sandraz," "The Honeymoon," "'Twixt Axe and Crown," and "Clancarty." At the St. James's I was with Mrs. Langtry, in 1890, in "As You Like It" and "Esther Sandraz," and then for a brief period I undertook the management of that theatre myself, producing "Your Wife," an adaptation from the French by Mr. Justin Huntly M'Carthy. At the Shaftesbury I undertook the title-*rôle* in "Kit Marlowe," written by my friend, W. L. Courtney, in aid of the Marlowe Memorial, and at another *matinée* Brigard in "Frou-Frou."

It will thus be seen that in my early days, as far as experience is concerned, I had no lack of variety, and for this I have always been grateful, as I am convinced that the only schooling of real service is acting itself. Indeed, it is solely by acting that one can acquire the tricks of the stage and learn what to avoid. And to learn what to avoid is in itself an asset of appreciable value in one's career; for obviously every artist must be better suited to some parts than to others.

It was in 1890, while on tour with Miss Fortescue, that Sir, then Mr., Charles Wyndham made me an offer to appear as Charles Courtlay in "London Assurance" at the Criterion, and later I acted Joseph Surface in his revival of "The School for Scandal." This part I studied in Rome, where I well remember that I encountered Mr. J. L. Toole, who "coached" me by giving, with Mr. C. M. Lowne, a burlesque of the Screen Scene amidst the ruins of a Roman theatre, to the possible edification but undoubted amazement of a small audience.

An excursion into management I took some time later, when I opened the Royalty Theatre with "The Chili Widow." During my Royalty experiences I produced Frankfort Moore's "Kitty Clive, Actress," with my sister-in-law, Miss Irene Vanbrugh, in the title-*rôle*; "Mr. *versus* Mrs.," from my own pen, aided by that of Mr. Morney Coutts, the highly powerful "M. de Paris," when my wife, Miss Violet Vanbrugh, leaped into fame as a tragic actress; Foote's "The Liar," with myself as Young Wilding of mendacious habits; and Mr. Herman Merivale's "The Queen's Proctor," from "Divorçons." By the by, it was while in Soho that I instituted a series of flying *matinées*, and I recall that, at the pretty Prince's Theatre, Bristol, we broke a long-standing record for receipts.

Writing of management reminds me that to a certain extent it must always be a pure gamble—and, regarding the question from a strictly mathematical point of view, I am not exaggerating when I say that it is perhaps the purest speculative pastime in the world. Why? Well, simply because you never really know where you are. What attracts at one house of course is no good at another. That is the obvious truth. But where a man gets "gravelled" is when he has a big success in one class of piece—say something pure and wholesome—and the next play of the same order that he puts on, for some strange psychological reason, proves a failure—perhaps a fiasco.

To watch the times and feel the pulse of the public is excellent advice, but it is not easy to follow. On occasions the public is full of whims and fads, and often does not itself seem quite to know what it wants. But, as the village philosopher would say, "Nothing is so bad that it could not be worse," and I can at least say that I have rarely known anything to fail that has been really good in itself. There are plays that will succeed in a dustbin. The *locale* of a theatre does not signify in the least; if you have a great play the public will flock to see it.

As an example of how difficult it is for a manager to say what will, or will not, succeed, let me take the case of "Pilkerton's Peerage." I frankly confess that I feared the political side of this play might be caviare to the general public. I had my doubts as to whether the giving of the order of the "C.B." by the Prime Minister would be understood, and I was of the opinion that the love interest would make the play. And yet, as a matter of actual fact, it was the political feature of "Pilkerton's Peerage" that drew the public!



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Still, to a certain extent, the life of the actor, whether he is in management or not, must always be something of a gamble—after all, many lives are—for which reason, while recommending the stage as an art, I would say to ambitious young men and women who think of taking it up as a profession—"Don't be entirely dependent on it." When the stage is Utopianized every actor and actress will have some means.

But of course in many respects the stage has changed greatly within recent years. Thus, from a social standpoint, it is now on a level with other arts, and it has also become a recognized profession that can be adopted just as readily as other walks of life where the earning of bread and butter, with occasional jam, is the main object in view.

But when I was a boy a tremendous fuss was made if a young fellow expressed his intention of becoming an actor; he was, indeed, almost bribed to change his mind. There would seem to have existed an impression that to be any good as an actor it was necessary for the said "hope-I-may-one-day-be-an-actor" to travel about the country with a carpet-bag in his hand and, at the same time, be perpetually down-at-heel. If he succeeded in emerging from the ordeal alive on thirty shillings a week it was, however, graciously conceded that there might exist some small possibility that he would one day be able to act.

And it sometimes occurs to me that there is a trifling amount of prejudice still existing against the stage as a profession, for occasionally, even to-day, I receive letters from parents whose children are thinking of acting which prove that the old-fashioned ideas of the dangers of the theatre, although they are obviously suffering from "heart disease," have not yet quite died out. The young men, it would seem, are supposed to beset the sirens, and the sirens to beset the young men; and a timid matron will thus feel it her bounden duty to ask whether a nurse could not go with her daughter and sit with her in the wings. But happily these fallacious ideas are becoming fewer and fewer. When the last idea is interred I would suggest, "No flowers, by request."

A little later on my wife and I made a special tour of the big English towns, with another to follow in America, where her breakdown in health, unfortunately, caused a sudden return to England and the cancelling of the greater part of the tour. Happily, however, in the South of France she quickly regained her strength, and was soon afterwards acting with me once more in "The Queen's Proctor" at the Strand Theatre. Here it was that I put on Mr. Leo Trevor's one-act play, "Dr. Johnson," in which we were afterwards commanded to appear by the late King Edward at Sandringham, being doubly honoured because Sir Henry Irving also presented "Waterloo" as the other play selected. The whole matter, I must tell you, was kept secret as a surprise for the German Emperor, who was then on a visit to Sandringham, and no member of my own company even knew the object of our visit, for, until the time for divulging my "guilty secret" arrived, I merely told them that we were going to give a "show" at my uncle's sanatorium!

But human nature being what it is—and the demands of human nature what they are—I had to tell my dresser, and I well remember that he was particularly perturbed over the honour; and, indeed, when once he had realized the full importance of the occasion, he became so overawed that for days he went about wearing a most dejected and worried look. Poor fellow—he was so overcome with awe, depression, and excitement that I could not resist having a little joke at his expense.

"You know you must not keep your boots on in Royal houses," I said. "Your hat if you like—but no boots." "Me corns, sir!" "Well," I replied, "I can't help it. If you aren't prepared to take your shoes off, you can't go!" For days he was fearfully miserable, and really, to judge by his looks, he might have been going into a rapid decline.

But one night, to my surprise, the atmosphere which since the announcement of our plans had surrounded him as with a pall suddenly disappeared, for, without intimating the honour in store for me, he put his head in at my dressing-room door with an expansive beatific smile on his face. "Sir," he said, "I've got a good idea. I've got a pair of cork soles. I s'pose I can wear 'em inside me socks?" But it wasn't until we were approaching Sandringham that I relieved his mind as to the Court etiquette and boots.

I confess that I felt a little nervous when the hour of performance arrived, but the two hundred and fifty spectators, including the Royal party, were so enthusiastic that very soon everybody felt at their ease. I remember, by the way, that the following lines between Boswell and Dr. Johnson in the play were received with much good humour:—

Boswell: Sir, the blood of kings is in my veins!
Dr. Johnson: Then be content to keep it there!

All the points, indeed, told, and the

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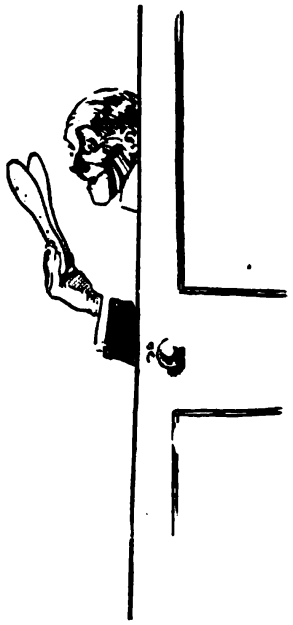
whole evening passed off in the most pleasant manner possible. As I have said, our enjoyment was greatly enhanced by being associated with Sir Henry Irving, surely the most courteous and kindly man I have ever known. When he had made up for Corporal Brewster —I remember the incident to-day as clearly as if it had happened but yesterday—Irving, with that wonderful thoughtfulness he ever had for others, looked into my dressing-room and, thinking the light was not so good as in his own, at once insisted upon my "making-up" in his room while he was on the stage.



Then, again, when he was invited into the Royal supper-room, he gently pushed Mrs. Bourchier forward so that she should enter first. The invitation came to Sir Henry, myself, and Mrs. Bourchier almost immediately the curtain fell on "Dr. Johnson," and I was in my make-up—the grease-paint and the false stomach. However, His Majesty sent word that I was to go in as I was. So to the equerry who brought the message I said, almost in the words of Dr. Johnson—"It is not for me to bandy civilities with my Sovereign." And so in I went.

By the way, once, when playing "Dr. Johnson," I collided with the scenery and punctured the rubber stomach, which suddenly gave out and slowly collapsed altogether. Apropos of which *contretemps* I am reminded that one night, after I had played the part at Wyndham's Theatre, a would-be learned and literary gentleman came into my dressing-room and, after complimenting me upon the atmosphere that I put into the character, exclaimed, "O rare Ben Jonson" —a remark which, I need scarcely say, almost knocked me out altogether.

Talking of command performances reminds me that King Edward paid me the very high compliment of commanding my wife, myself, and our company to appear at Windsor in "The Merchant of Venice" while the play was running at the Garrick Theatre. This was the only command performance of a Shakespearean play during His Majesty's reign, and, by an odd coincidence, the same play was commanded on the same stage by Her Majesty Queen Victoria when Charles Kean and his wife were the Shylock and Portia.



"'SIR,' HE SAID, 'I'VE GOT A GOOD IDEA. I'VE GOT A PAIR OF CORK SOLES. I S'POSE I CAN WEAR 'EM INSIDE ME SOCKS?'"

In recent years alterations have taken place in matters appertaining to the theatre, not the least striking of which have been the rise in the popularity and many changes in the character of vaudeville theatres, which have resulted in some of the most famous actors and actresses of the day, including that great artiste, Mme. Sarah Bernhardt, whom I had the honour of meeting on her arrival at Folkestone two years ago, making their appearance on the variety stage.

I have seen the view expressed that the popularity of variety and cinema houses must in time detract not a little from the interest taken by the general public in legitimate theatres. With this point of view, however, I do not agree for a single instant. The theatre to-day is as popular with every section of the public as it ever has been. All that the public ask is that they may be given "what they want." When they are thus provided they rally round the theatre to-day as enthusiastically as ever.

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# EASY MONEY



BY

## W·W·JACOBS

Illustrated by Will Owen.

A LAD of about twenty stepped ashore from the schooner *Jane* and, joining a girl who had been avoiding for some ten minutes the ardent gaze of the night-watchman, set off arm in arm. The watchman rolled his eyes and shook his head slowly.

Nearly all his money on 'is back, he said, and what little bit 'e's got over he'll spend on 'er. And three months arter they're married he'll wonder wot 'e ever saw in her. If a man marries he wishes he 'adn't, and if he doesn't marry he wishes he 'ad. That's life.

Looking at them two young fools reminds me of a nevy of Sam Small's—a man I think I've spoken to you of afore. As a rule Sam didn't trouble much about 'is relations, but there was a sister of 'is in the country wot 'e was rather fond of, because 'e 'adn't seen 'er for twenty years. She 'ad got a boy wot 'ad just got a job in London, and when 'e wrote and told 'er he was keeping company with the handsomest and loveliest and best-'arted gal in the whole wide world she wrote to Sam about it, and asked 'im to give 'is nevy some good advice.

Sam 'ad just got back from China, and was living in lodgings with Peter Russet and Ginger Dick as usual, and, arter reading the letter through about seven times and asking Ginger how 'e spelt " minx," 'e read the letter out loud to 'em and asked 'em wot they thought about it.

Ginger shook his head, and, arter thinking a bit, Peter shook his too.

" She's caught 'im rather young," ses Ginger.

" They get it bad at that age, too," ses Peter. " When I was twenty there was a gal as I was fond of, and a regiment couldn't have parted us."

" Wot did part you, then ? " ses Sam.

" Another gal," ses Peter. " A gal I took a fancy to, that's wot did it."

" I was nearly married when I was twenty," ses Ginger, with a far-away look in his eyes. " She was the most beautiful gal I ever saw in my life ; she 'ad one 'undred pounds a year of 'er own, and she couldn't bear me out of her sight—— If a thump acrost the jaw would do that cough of yours any good, Sam——"

" Don't take no notice of 'im, Ginger," ses Peter. " Why didn't you marry 'er ? "

" 'Cos I was afraid she might think I was arter 'er money," ses Ginger, getting a little bit closer to Sam.

Peter 'ad another turn then, and him and Ginger kept on talking about gals whose 'arts they 'ad broke, till Sam didn't know wot to do with 'imself.

" I'll just step round and see my nevy while you and Peter are amusing each other," he ses at last. " I'll ask 'im to come round to-morrow, and then you can give 'im good advice."

He brought the nevy round next evening.

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Bright, cheerful young chap 'e was, and he agreed with everything they said. When Peter said as 'ow all gals was deceivers he said he'd known it for years, but they was born that way, and couldn't 'elp it; and when Ginger said that no man ought to marry afore 'e was fifty, he corrected 'im and made it fifty-five.

"I'm glad to 'ear you talk like that," ses Ginger.

"So am I," ses Peter.

"He's got his 'ead screwed on right," ses Sam, wot thought 'is sister 'ad made a mistake.

"I'm surprised, when I look round, at the wimmen men 'ave married," ses the nevy. "Wot they could 'ave seen in them I can't think. Me and my young lady often laugh about it."

"Your wot?" ses Sam, pretending to be very surprised.

"My young lady," ses the nevy.

Sam gives a cough. "I didn't know you'd got a young lady," he ses.

"Well, I 'ave," ses his nevy; "and we're going to be married at Christmas."

"But—but you ain't fifty-five," ses Ginger.

"I'm twenty-one," ses the nevy, "but my case is different. There isn't another young lady like mine in the world. She's different to all the others, and it isn't likely I'm going to let 'er be snapped up by somebody else. Fifty-five! Why, 'ow I'm going to wait till Christmas I don't know. She's the prettiest and handsomest gal in the world; and she's the cleverest one I ever met. You ought to hear 'er laugh. Like music it is. You'd never forget it."

"Twenty-one is young," ses Ginger, shaking his 'ead. "'Ave you known 'er long?"

"Three months," ses the nevy. "She lives in the same street as I do. 'Ow it is she ain't been snapped up before I can't think; but she told me she didn't care for men till she met me."

"They all say that," ses Ginger.

"If I've 'ad it said to me once, I've 'ad it said to me twenty times," ses Peter, nodding.

"They do it to flatter," ses old Sam, looking as if 'e knew all about it. "You wait till you are my age, Joe; then you'll know. Why, I should ha' been married dozens o' times if I 'adn't been careful."

"P'r'aps it was a bit on both sides," ses Joe, looking at 'is uncle. "P'r'aps they was careful too. If you only saw my young lady you wouldn't talk like that. She's got the truthfullest eyes in the world. Large grey eyes, like a child's; leastways, sometimes they are grey and sometimes they are blue. It seems to depend on the light, somehow. I 'ave seen them when they was almost a brown—brownish gold. And she smiles with 'er eyes."

"Hasn't she got a mouth?" ses Ginger, wot was getting a bit tired of it.

"You've been crossed in love," ses the nevy, looking at 'im. "That's wot's the matter with you. And I don't wonder at it."

Ginger 'arf got up, but Sam gave him a look and 'e sat down agin, and then they all sat quiet while the nevy went on telling them about 'is gal.

"I should like to see 'er," ses his uncle at last.

"Call round for me at seven to-morrow night," ses the young 'un, "and I'll introduce you."

"We might look in on our way," ses Sam, arter Ginger and Peter 'ad both made eyes at 'im. "We're going out to spend the evening."

"The more the merrier," ses his nevy. "Well, so long; I expect she's waiting for me."

He got up and said good-bye, and arter he 'ad gorn Sam and the other two shook their 'eads together, and said wot a pity it was to be twenty-one. Ginger said it made 'im sad to think of it, and Peter said 'ow any gal could look at a man under thirty 'e couldn't think.

They all went round to the nevy's the next evening. They was a little bit early, owing to Ginger's watch 'aving been set right by guesswork, and they 'ad to sit in a row on the nevy's bed watching while 'e cleaned 'imself and changed 'is clothes. Although it was only Wednesday 'e changed 'is collar, and he was so long making up his mind about his necktie that 'is uncle tried to make it up for him. By the time he 'ad finished, Sam said it made 'im think it was Sunday.

Miss Gill was at 'ome when they got there, and all three of 'em was very much surprised that such a good-looking gal should take up with Sam's nevy. Ginger nearly said so, but Peter gave 'im a dig in the back just in time, and 'e called him something under 'is breath instead.

"Why shouldn't we all make an evening of it?" ses Ginger, arter staring hard at the gal for about ten minutes, while the nevy kept looking at the clock and shuffling 'is feet.

"Because two's company," ses Mrs. Gill. "Why, you was young yourself once."

"He's young now, mother," ses the gal, giving Ginger a nice smile.

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"I tell you wot we might do," ses Mrs. Gill, putting 'er finger to her forehead and considering. "You and Joe go out and 'ave your evening, and me and these gentlemen'll go off together somewhere. I should enjoy an outing; I ain't 'ad one for a long time."

Ginger said it 'ud be very nice if she thought it wouldn't make 'er too tired, and afore Sam and Peter could think of anything to say she was upstairs putting 'er bonnet on. They thought o' plenty to say while they was sitting alone with Ginger, waiting for 'er.

"My idea was for the gal and your nevy to come too," ses pore Ginger. "Then I thought we might lose 'im and I would 'ave a little chat with the gal and show 'er 'ow foolish she was."

"Well, you've done it now," ses Sam; "spoilt our evening."

"P'r'aps good'll come out of it," ses Ginger. "If the old lady takes a fancy to us, we shall be able to come again, and then to please you, Sam, I'll have a go to cut your nevy out."

Sam stared at 'im, and Peter stared too, and then they looked at each other and began to laugh, till Ginger forgot where 'e was and offered to put Sam through the winder. They was still quarrelling under their breath, and saying wot they'd like to do to each other, when Mrs. Gill came downstairs. Dressed up to the nines she was, and them three walked down the street with a feeling that everybody was looking at them.

One thing that 'elped to spoil the evening was that Mrs. Gill wouldn't go into public-'ouses, but to make up for it she went into sweetstuff shops three times and 'ad ices while they stood and watched 'er and wondered 'ow she could do it. And arter that she stopped at a place Poplar way, where there was a few swings and roundabouts and things. She was as skittish as a schoolgal, and arter taking pore Sam on the roundabouts till 'e didn't know whether he was on his 'eels or his 'ead, she got 'im into a boat-swing and swung 'im till he felt like a boy on 'is fust v'y'ge. Then she took 'im to the rifle gallery, and arter three shots the man took the gun away from 'im and threatened to send for the police.

It was an expensive evening for all of them, but, as Ginger said when they got 'ome, they 'ad broken the ice, and he bet Peter Russet 'arf a dollar that afore two days 'ad passed he'd take the nevy's gal for a walk. He stepped round by 'imself the next arternoon, and made 'imself agreeable to Mrs. Gill, and the day arter they was both so nice and kind that 'e plucked up 'is courage and offered to take Miss Gill to the Zoo.

She said "No" at fust, of course, but arter Ginger 'ad pointed out that Joe was at work all day and couldn't take 'er 'imself, and that 'e was Joe's uncle's best pal, she began to think better of it.

"Why not?" ses her mother. "Joe wouldn't mind. He wouldn't be so silly as to be jealous of Mr. Ginger Dick."

"Of course not," ses the gal.

She let 'er mother and Ginger persuade 'er arter a time, and then she went upstairs to clean herself and put on a little silver brooch that Ginger said he 'ad picked up coming along.

She took about three-quarters of an hour to get ready, but when she came down Ginger felt that it was quite worth it. He couldn't take 'is eyes off 'er, as the saying goes, and 'e sat by 'er side on top of the omnibus like a man in a dream.

"This is better than being at sea," he ses at last.

"Don't you like the sea?" ses the gal. "I should like to go to sea myself."

"I shouldn't mind the sea if you was there," ses Ginger.

Miss Gill turned her 'ead away. "You mustn't talk to me like that," she ses, in a soft voice. "Still——"

"Still wot?" ses Ginger, arter waiting a long time.

"I mean, if I did go to sea, it *would* be nice to have a friend on board," ses the gal. "I suppose you ain't afraid of storms, are you?"

"I like 'em," ses Ginger.

"You look as if you would," ses the gal, giving 'im a little look under 'er eyelashes. "It must be nice to be a man, and be brave. I wish I was a man."

"I don't," ses Ginger.

"Why not?" ses the gal, turning her 'ead away agin.

Ginger didn't answer; he gave 'er elbow a little squeeze instead. She took it away at once, and Ginger was wishing he 'adn't been so foolish, when it came back agin, and they sat for a long time without speaking a word.

"The sea is all right for some things," ses Ginger, at last; "but suppose a man gets married!"

The gal shook her 'ead. "It would be hard on 'is wife," she ses, with another little look at 'im; "but—but——"

Ginger pinched 'er elbow agin.

"But p'r'aps he would get a job ashore," she ses, "and then 'e could take his wife out for a bus-ride every day."

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They 'ad to change buses arter a time, and they got on a wrong bus and went miles out of their way, but neither of 'em seemed to mind. Ginger said he was thinking of something else, and the gal said she was too. They got to the Zoological Gardens at last, and Ginger said he 'ad never enjoyed 'imself so much. When the lions roared she pinched his arm, and when they 'ad an elephant ride she was holding on to 'im with both 'ands.

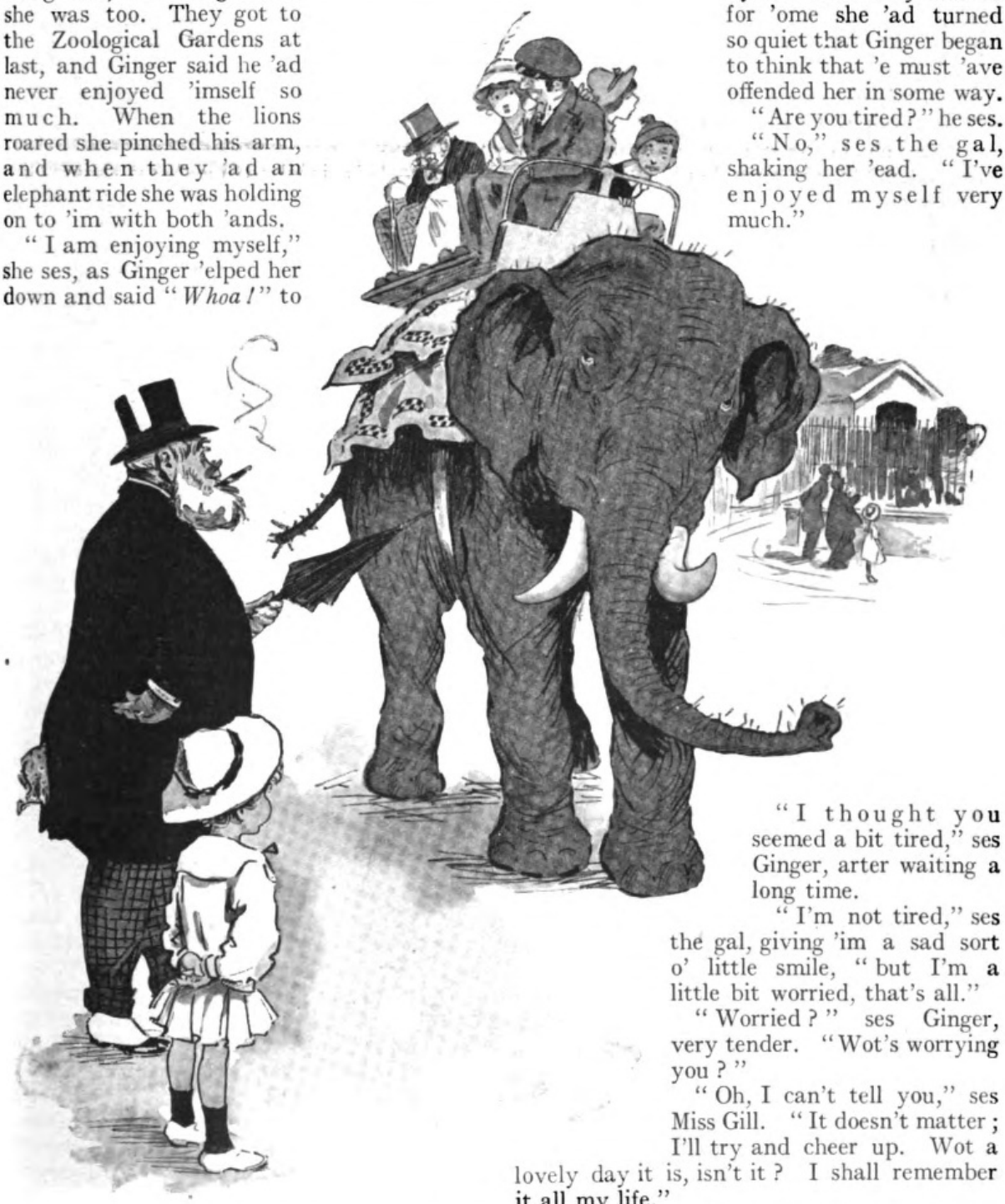
"I am enjoying myself," she ses, as Ginger 'elped her down and said "*Whoa!*" to the elephant. "I know it's wicked, but I can't 'elp it, and wot's more I don't want to 'elp it."

She let Ginger take 'er arm when she nearly tripped up over a peppermint-ball some kid 'ad dropped; and arter a little persuasion she 'ad a bottle of lemonade and six bath buns at a refreshment stall, for dinner.

She was as nice as she could be to him, but by the time they started for 'ome she 'ad turned so quiet that Ginger began to think that 'e must 'ave offended her in some way.

"Are you tired?" he ses.

"No," ses the gal, shaking her 'ead. "I've enjoyed myself very much."



"WHEN THEY 'AD AN ELEPHANT RIDE SHE WAS HOLDING ON TO 'IM WITH BOTH 'ANDS."

"I thought you seemed a bit tired," ses Ginger, arter waiting a long time.

"I'm not tired," ses the gal, giving 'im a sad sort o' little smile, "but I'm a little bit worried, that's all."

"Worried?" ses Ginger, very tender. "Wot's worrying you?"

"Oh, I can't tell you," ses Miss Gill. "It doesn't matter; I'll try and cheer up. Wot a lovely day it is, isn't it? I shall remember it all my life."

"Wot is it worrying you?" ses Ginger, in a determined voice. "Can't you tell *me?*"

"No," ses the gal, shaking her 'ead, "I can't tell you because you might want to 'elp me, and I couldn't allow that."

"Why shouldn't I 'elp you?" ses Ginger.

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"It's wot we was put 'ere for, to 'elp one another."

"I couldn't tell you," ses the gal, just dabbing at 'er eyes with a lace pocket-'ankercher about one and a 'arf times the size of 'er nose.

"Not if I ask you to?" ses Ginger.

Miss Gill shook her 'ead, and then she tried her 'ardest to turn the conversation. She talked about the weather, and the monkey-'ouse, and a gal in 'er street whose 'air changed from red to black in a single night, but it was all no good. Ginger wouldn't be put off, and at last she ses:—

"Well," she ses, "if you must know, I'm in a difficulty. I 'ave got to get three pounds, and where to get it I don't know any more than the man in the moon. Now let's talk about something else"

"Do you owe it?" ses Ginger.

"I can't tell you any more," ses Miss Gill; "and I wouldn't 'ave told you that only you asked me, and somehow I feel as though I 'ave to tell you things."

"Three pounds ain't much," ses pore Ginger, wot 'ad just been paid off arter a long v'y'ge. "I can let you 'ave it and welcome."

Miss Gill started away from 'im as though she 'ad been stung, and it took 'im all his time to talk 'er round agin. When he 'ad she begged 'is pardon and said 'e was the most generous man she 'ad ever met, but it couldn't be.

"I don't know when I cou'd pay it back," she ses; "but I thank you all the same for offering it."

"Pay it back when you like," ses Ginger; "and if you never pay it back it doesn't matter."

He offered 'er the money four or five times, but she wouldn't take it. At last, just as they got near her 'ouse, he forced it in her 'and, and put his 'ands in his pockets when she tried to make 'im take it back.

"You *are* good to me!" she ses, arter they 'ad gone inside and she 'ad given Ginger a bottle o' beer to amuse 'imself with. "I shall never forget you."

"I 'ope not," ses Ginger, starting. "Are you coming out agin to-morrow?"

"I'm afraid I can't," ses Miss Gill, shaking her 'ead and looking sorrowful.

"Not with me?" ses Ginger, sitting down beside her on the sofa and putting 'is arm so that she could lean against it if she wanted to.

"I don't think I can," ses the gal, leaning back very gently.

"Think agin," ses Ginger, squeezing 'er waist a little.

Miss Gill shook her 'ead and turned and looked at 'im. Her face was so close to his that, thinking she 'ad put it there a-purpose, he kissed it, and the next moment 'e got a clout that made his 'ead ring.

"'Ow dare you!" ses Miss Gill, jumping up with a scream. "'Ow dare you! "'Ow——"

"Wot's the matter?" shrieks 'er mother, coming downstairs like a runaway barrel of treacle.

"He—he's insulted me," ses Miss Gill, taking out her little 'ankercher, and sobbing. "He—he—k-kissed me!"

"WOT?" ses Mrs. Gill. "Well, I'd never 'ave believed it! Never! Why, 'e ought to be taken up. Wot d'yer mean by it?" she ses, turning on pore Ginger.

Ginger tried to explain, but it was all no good; and two minutes arterwards 'e was walking back to 'is lodgings like a dog with its tail between its legs. His 'ead was going round and round with astonishment, and 'e was in such a temper that 'e barged into a man twice as big as 'imself, and then offered to knock his 'ead off when 'e objected. And when Sam and Peter asked him 'ow he 'ad got on, he was in such a state of mind that it was all 'e could do to answer 'em.

"And I'll trouble you for my 'arf-dollar, Peter," he ses. "I've been out with 'er all day and I've won my bet."

Peter paid it over like a lamb, and then 'e sat thinking 'ard for a bit.

"Are you going out with 'er agin to-morrow, Ginger?" he ses, arter a time.

"I don't know," ses Ginger, careless-like. "I ain't made up my mind yet."

Peter looked at 'im, and then 'e looked at Sam and winked. "Let me 'ave a try," he ses. "I'll bet you another 'arf-dollar that I take 'er out. P'r'aps I shall come 'ome in a better temper than wot you 'ave."

Old Sam said it wasn't right to play with a gal's 'art in that way, but arter a lot o' talk and telling Sam to shut up, Ginger took the bet. He was quite certain in 'is own mind that Miss Gill would slam the door in Peter's face, and arter he 'ad started off next morning Ginger and Sam waited in to 'ave the pleasure of laughing in 'is face.

They got tired of waiting at last, and went out to enjoy themselves and breathe the fresh air in pubs down Poplar way. They got back at seven o'clock, and ten minutes arterwards Peter came in and sat down on his bed and began to smoke without a word.

"Had a good time?" ses Ginger.

"Rippin'," ses Peter, holding 'is pipe

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tight between 'is teeth. "You owe me 'arf a dollar, Ginger."

"Where'd you go?" ses Ginger, passing it over.

"Crystal Pallis," ses Peter.

"Are you going to take 'er out to-morrow?" ses Sam.

"I don't think so," ses Peter, taking 'is pipe out of 'is mouth and yawning. "She's rather too young for me; I like talking to a gal wot's a bit older. I won't stand in Ginger's way."

"I found 'er a bit young, too," ses Ginger. "P'r'aps we'd better let Sam's nevy 'ave her. Arter all, it's a bit rough on 'im, when you come to think of it."

"You're quite right," ses Peter, jumping up; "it's Sam's business, and why we should go out of our way and inconvenience ourselves to do 'im a good turn, I don't know."

"It's Sam all over," ses Ginger; "he's always like that, and the more you try and oblige 'im the more you may."

They went on abusing Sam till he got sick and tired of it; and arter telling 'em wot he thought of 'em he slammed the door and went out and spent the evening by 'imself. He would 'ardly speak to them next day, but arter tea he brightened up a bit and they went off together as if nothing 'ad happened. And the fust thing they saw as they turned out of their street was Sam's nevy, coming along smiling till it made their faces ache to look at him.

"I was just coming to see you," he ses.

"We're just off—on business," ses Ginger.

"I wasn't going to stop," ses the nevy. "My young lady just told me to step along and show uncle wot she has bought me. A silver watch and chain and a gold ring. Look at it!"

He held his 'and under Ginger's nose, and Ginger stood there looking at it and opening and shutting 'is mouth like a dying fish. Then he took Peter by the arm and led 'im away while the nevy was opening' is new watch and showing Sam the works.

"'Ow much did she get out of *you*, Peter?"




"A SILVER WATCH AND CHAIN AND A GOLD RING. LOOK AT IT!"

ses Ginger, hoarsely. "I don't want any lies."

"Three quid," ses Peter, staring at 'im.

"Same 'ere," ses Ginger, grinding his teeth. "Did she give you a smack on the side of your face?"

"Wot—are—you—talking about, Ginger?" ses Peter.

"Did she smack your face *too?*" ses Ginger.

"Yes," ses Peter.



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# Sovereigns



THE INFANTA EULALIA.
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I.

## THE CZAR and His People.

By

## H.R.H. THE INFANTA EULALIA OF SPAIN.

We now present our readers with the first of a new series of articles by H.R.H. The Infanta Eulalia of Spain, whose recent contributions to this magazine attracted such widespread attention. Dealing as it does with the Court of our ally, the Czar of Russia, the article will be read with unusual interest at the present time.

I HAVE rarely felt happier than I did when I heard that Nicholas II. had called on his subjects to take a share in the government of the vast Russian Empire. The publication of the Imperial Manifesto of October, 1905, in which the Emperor announced the creation of the Imperial Duma, was an event of first-class importance, and I admired the spirit of the nation which had shown its determination to limit the power of the Crown and the wisdom of the Emperor in yielding to the desires of his subjects.

# as they are

"This is the first step," I said, "on the path which must ultimately lead to the substitution of democratic for autocratic government in Russia."

My affection for the Emperor and Empress, my enthusiasm for the advancement of democratic ideas, my recollections of a long visit to Russia, all combined to intensify my interest in the dawn of freedom in a land which I felt, when I visited it, was part of Asia included in Europe by some strange mistake of the geographers.

It was mid-winter when I arrived for the first time in St. Petersburg, magical beneath its snow mantle, and I came as a simple tourist to see the country and to study the conditions of Russian life. I established myself in an hotel as a Spanish countess, feeling delighted that nobody knew who I actually was and revelling in the freedom of strict *incognita*. But I had not been in the hotel five hours before a Grand Master of Ceremonies arrived and betrayed my secret. From that minute everybody knew that the Countess was an Infanta of Spain, and my liberty was gone. It is my usual experience. I arrive somewhere, believing that not a soul knows where I am, and, almost before I have taken possession of my rooms, there is a whirr of the telephone bell and somebody at the other end saying: "Eulalia, how did you get here? You must come and see us at once."

The Grand Master of Ceremonies brought me a message from the Emperor and Empress, telling me how delighted they were to know that they were going to see me soon, and suggesting that I should come to the Winter Palace the next morning for the Twelfth Day ceremony of the Blessing of the Waters.

"But I have nothing to wear!" I cried.

It was absolutely true. I had never expected to figure at a Court ceremony, and it had not occurred to me to bring a *manteau de cour*. Etiquette, however, is less severe in Russia than in Spain or in Prussia, as I soon discovered, and the next morning I put on my smartest frock and drove to the Winter Palace, a gigantic building, painted dull red, with rows of gods and goddesses standing on the cornice of its stupendous façade, looking cold and unhappy in the nipping air.

I had not seen the Empress since we were girls, staying with Queen Victoria at Windsor or in the beautiful Isle of Wight. And what a charming girl she was! A simple English girl, in spite of her German title, in a skirt and blouse, utterly unaffected, warm-hearted, and fresh as a rosebud touched with dew. I was thinking of the happy, careless days when we were in England together, as I drove to the palace, forgetting the change that the passage of the years makes in the friends of one's youth, and when I went into the room where the Empress was waiting to watch the Blessing of the Waters from the window I felt startled to find, instead of the girl I used to know, a surpassingly beautiful and stately woman. The petals of the rosebud had unfolded. She was the centre of a brilliant group of Grand Duchesses and ladies, all wearing the strange but beautiful dress of the Russian Court, with long hanging sleeves. On her head was a *kokoshnik*, a crescent-shaped diadem, flaming with diamonds, from which fell a long white veil, and her stateliness and beauty distinguished her from all the other sumptuous figures surrounding her. A stranger who had never seen her before would have been certain that it was she, and not one of the others, who was Empress.

"How good to see you again, Eulalia, after all these years!" she said, coming towards me; and she put her arms round me and kissed me.

And in that greeting I realized that the Czarina had not changed. She was still the affectionate and unaffected friend I had known years before. We had a hundred questions to ask each other, but almost before we had had time to begin we had to stop talking to attend to the imposing ceremony which was beginning on the frozen Neva.

From the window I saw that a pavilion, like an exceedingly decorative bandstand, had been erected on the ice, just in front of the palace, and I watched a procession of ecclesiastics in stiff Byzantine robes and

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glittering mitres move slowly across the road separating it from the palace, followed by the Grand Dukes and the Emperor. The singing of the choir floated to us through the frosty air, and the Empress crossed herself devoutly. She is a sincerely religious woman.

I watched the Emperor standing motionless beneath the fretted and gilded canopy of the pavilion, and the thought suddenly flashed into my mind that the Russian Emperors alone claim the right to govern the souls as well as the bodies of their subjects. The Autocrat is a great ecclesiastical personage as well as a secular ruler, and the Russian Church depends upon him and can do nothing without his consent. I remembered that banishment to Siberia was the punishment for those who deserted the Orthodox Church and refused to believe as the Czar believes and to pray as the Czar prays. The Kings of Spain and the Emperors of Austria are sons, not rulers, of the Church, and I had been taught that the Pope was King of Kings. It seemed to me that no worse form of despotism could be conceived than the concentration in the hands of an autocratic ruler of the spiritual and temporal power, and as these thoughts crowded into my mind there seemed to me something sinister and terrible in the ceremony I was watching, and I realized, as I had never done before, the immensity and the awfulness of the power wielded by the motionless figure beneath the gay pavilion. Nobody rejoiced more than I did when the Emperor published the Manifesto of April, 1905, granting his subjects religious liberty, and I realized that the stupendous claim which had made me shudder when I thought of it as I watched the sumptuous Twelfth Day ceremony from the windows of the Winter Palace had been renounced for ever. In point of fact, Nicholas II. had no desire to maintain it, and he renounced it as soon as an appropriate occasion arose.



THE WINTER PALACE,
*Photo. by Underwood*



*Photo. by]* THE CZARINA. *[Boissonnas & Eggler.*

"AWAY FROM THE FORMALITIES OF THE COURT, THE CZARINA WAS ALWAYS RADIANT AND HAPPY. THE SMILING MOTHER SEEMED A DIFFERENT WOMAN FROM THE BEAUTIFUL BUT GRAVE LADY SEEN BY THE PUBLIC IN THE CEREMONIES OF THE COURT."

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ST. PETERSBURG.
*& Underwood.*



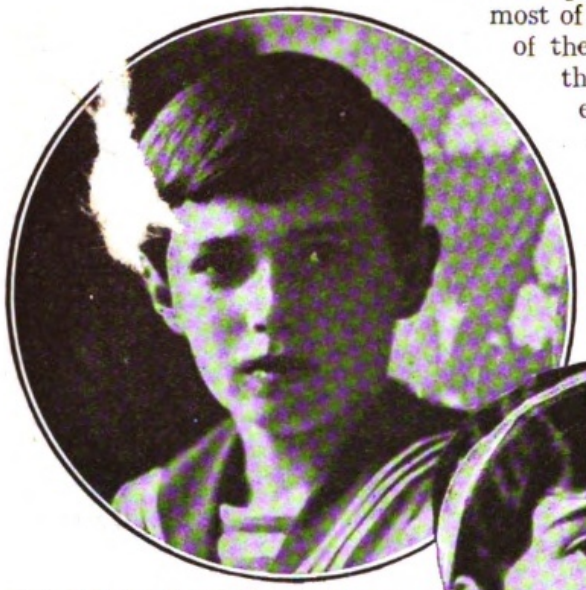
*Photo. by]* THE CZAR. *[Boissonnas & Eggler.*

"ONE HAS ONLY TO LOOK INTO HIS BEAUTIFUL BLUE EYES TO REALIZE THAT HE IS NEITHER HARSH NOR CRUEL AND TO UNDERSTAND HIS GREAT TENDERNESS."

After the picturesque ceremony which had stirred these thoughts had ended, and the Archbishop had dipped a golden cross in the water running below the ice of the river, the holy water was brought into the palace to the Empress, and the Emperor joined us. He gave me a characteristically Russian welcome. His manner was engagingly simple and unaffected. The contrast between him and the German Emperor was extraordinary. The Kaiser, a constitutional monarch whose power is strictly limited, shows by his bearing and his manner, as I have indicated in another article, that he holds the divine right of kings to be a cardinal article of faith. When one is with the Czar it requires a certain effort of the imagination to remember that he possesses autocratic power over the lives of a hundred and sixty million human beings. The Russians are the most hospitable people in the world, and the Emperor and Empress are not excelled by any of their subjects in kindness and generosity to guests. They both insisted that, so long as I remained in St. Petersburg, I must be with them as much as possible, and, in point of fact, although I slept at the hotel, I was constantly at the Winter Palace and had my part in the intimate family life of the Imperial Family.

When a man likes nothing better than to remain at home with his wife it is a sure sign that he is very much in love with her. Judged by that test, there is no happier couple in Europe than the Emperor and Empress of Russia. They are never more contented than when together, and it was obvious to me that the Czar simply adores his wife. It would be strange if he did not, for there is not a gentler or sweeter woman in the world than the beautiful Czarina. And both of them are devoted to their children. They used to

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**RUSSIA'S FUTURE EMPEROR.**
A CHARMING PORTRAIT OF THE CZAREVITCH.

make me come with them sometimes to the nursery, where the little Grand Duchesses used to welcome us with shrieks of delight. What games there were! People who think of the Czar as a frowning despot would have been astonished to see a vigorous pillow-fight going on between him and his children. And away from the formalities of the Court, closeted with her children, the Czarina was always radiant and happy. Under the spell of their prattle and of their caresses she was transformed. The smiling mother seemed a different woman from the beautiful but grave lady seen by the public in the ceremonies of the Court.

"Do try and get the Empress to smile, Eulalia," said one of the Grand Duchesses to me at some Court function.

But that was sooner said than done. There is not a trace of artificiality in the Empress's character. She seemed unable to pretend she was enjoying herself when, in point of fact, she was fatigued and bored. Moving as the central figure of a splendid pageant, I think she was always wishing the ceremony to be at an end and to find herself free to be with her children again.

The tastes of the Emperor are as simple as the Empress's, and in curious contrast to those of most of the members of the Imperial Family. Neither of them likes the late supper-parties which most of their relations indulge in. Early to bed and early to rise is my motto, and supper-parties, hardly finished at two o'clock in the morning, bored me unutterably. When I went to the opera with the Emperor and Empress we used to take time by the forelock and sup in the second *entr'acte*, in order to be able to go straight to bed when we got home. The ballets given at the Marinsky Theatre were exceedingly beautiful, and the Empress followed the movements of the dancers with evident enjoyment from the stage-box. Behind the box is a charming room, and there it was that supper used to be served.

"Here is your high tea, Eulalia," the Empress would say, merrily, and then we sat down to a square meal of cold meat and countless cups of tea, to which I used to do ample justice, as I did not dine before going to the theatre.

His love of simplicity does not, however, prevent the Emperor from enjoying

**THE CZAR'S ELDEST DAUGHTER.**
A RECENT PORTRAIT OF THE GRAND DUCHESS OLGA.



**THE SECOND DAUGHTER OF THE CZAR.**
THE GRAND DUCHESS TATIANA.

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society. Like most Russians, he is fond of it, and his animation and vivacity at Court balls was delightful and, moreover, genuine. I liked to watch him dance the mazurka, that rushing, almost violent, dance that they say only a Slav can dance to perfection. It was so obvious that he enjoyed it. When supper was served we went to a long table on a dais, set at one end of a great hall, and I discovered that the Russian Court has a very charming custom which does not obtain elsewhere. The Emperor and Empress took their places, facing the general company, with their Royal guests and other members of the Imperial Family to right and to left of them; but we had hardly been a minute at table before the Emperor rose and went to one of the tables below the dais, where he sat down and chatted with the people supping at it. After talking for five minutes he went to another table to greet other guests, and then passed from group to group, sitting down at each table for a few minutes. And, with the Russian instinct of hospitality, the Emperor played the part of host so well that the conversation became more animated at each table he visited. The presence of some Sovereigns, too careful of preserving the distance between themselves and persons who are not of the Blood Royal, sometimes casts a gloom on their guests.

Perhaps the Emperor's obvious enjoyment of a ball was due to the fact that it is but seldom that he can allow himself relaxation. There is not a busier man in the world. I once remarked to him that I find it impossible to get through the work of the day unless I follow a definite rule, and I asked him how he divided up his time.

"I get up early," he answered, "and after a light breakfast I work until eleven. Then I take a walk, and come back for luncheon at half-past twelve. After that comes the task of giving audiences to Ministers and others, and, when work allows it, I take a drive before tea in order to get some fresh air. Immediately after tea I am busy again with my secretaries, and work with them lasts until dinner-time."

"A strenuous day," I said.

"But that is not the end of it," he answered, smiling. "I am very often obliged to go back to work straight from the



**THE YOUNGEST DAUGHTER OF THE RUSSIAN ROYAL FAMILY.**
THE GRAND DUCHESS ANASTASIA.



**THEIR MAJESTIES' THIRD DAUGHTER.**
THE GRAND DUCHESS MARIA.

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dinner-table, and sometimes it is not finished until far on into the night."

The Emperor's devotion to duty is in striking contrast to the almost traditional love of pleasure displayed by the Grand Dukes. A foreigner might easily be led to suppose that the House of Romanoff is at heart in sympathy with democratic ideas. The lack of formality at Court, the marriages between Grand Dukes and commoners, the presence of unlettered peasants at certain of the ceremonies of the Winter Palace, the share taken by some of the members of the Imperial Family in amusements accessible to anybody who has money in his pocket, their supper-parties in restaurants, and their enjoyment of the *café* concerts of the capital, all these things might deceive the stranger. To know the Grand Dukes and Grand Duchesses is to realize that they neither understand the aspirations of the democracy nor sympathize with them, for, reflecting the glory of autocracy, they are more firmly convinced than any other Royal persons in Europe that a gulf divides them from the rest of mankind. And this conviction is so deep that they appear to believe that the most ordinary actions are ennobled by the mere fact that they are performed by persons in whose veins flows the Imperial blood. The life led by most of them would be unbearable to me. A perpetual round of amusements becomes in the end as wearisome as the treadmill. How people who are not in the first flush of youth can day after day sit up until two o'clock in the morning, as too many of them do, eating unnecessary suppers and drinking champagne, I cannot understand. High tea with the Emperor and Empress pleased me better than late suppers with the Grand Dukes and Grand Duchesses. Indeed, when I yielded to persuasion and went out with them for an evening's amusement my sleepiness used to divert them immensely.

"Eulalia, you're yawning," they would say.

"It is two hours past my bed-time," I would answer.

And then we laughed, and it was probably the Grand Duke Alexis who would suggest that we should all drive out to the islands and have another supper at a *café* concert. Then I would strike and go home, scolding myself for sitting up so late and marvelling at the extraordinary vitality of the rest of the company, starting merrily on the long sledge-drive to the islands, where they would sit by the hour in a private room overlooking the little stage on which the unsuccessful artistes of Paris danced and sang.

Perhaps it is because I am Spanish and not Russian that I failed to see the pleasure to be derived from spending the night in frivolity, for, in point of fact, there is nothing characteristically grand-ducal in this curious craze; it is simply Russian, and Moscow merchants will spend thousands of roubles in extravagant amusements between midnight and sunrise. The Grand Dukes are typical Russians. They have the virtues and the failings of the typical Russian, and—I am not sure whether it is a virtue or a failing—they are, like all the Russians I have ever met, exceedingly susceptible to feminine charms. To the Russian love is everything, and in Russia women have more power to change men's lives than in any other land. To please the woman he loves a Russian will exile himself to a foreign country, will alter his habits, and change his manner of life completely. It is not, therefore, surprising that members of the House of Romanoff have deliberately incurred the anger of the Emperor and voluntarily left Russia to live abroad for the sake of the women they love. They make their homes in Paris or in the English country-side and become the humble slaves of the wives they have chosen, while these ladies, although perhaps of humble origin, find themselves treated by society, always anxious to gain the approval of princes, with hardly less reverence than princesses of the Blood Royal.

But if the majority of the members of the Imperial Family love extravagant amusement, there is one notable exception to the rule. The Grand Duchess Elizabeth, widow of the Grand Duke Serge, who was assassinated by Revolutionists, shares the simple tastes of her sister the Empress, and detests the empty formalities of Courts as much as I do. When we were girls we saw a great deal of each other at Windsor and in the Isle of Wight, and it was a great delight to me to talk over the old days when I visited her in her palace within the fantastic battlements of the Kremlin. She was undoubtedly one of the most beautiful women in Europe, and her husband was extraordinarily handsome; indeed, their beauty and their bearing made them the most distinguished couple at the great gathering of Royal personages I met at Buckingham Palace when the Jubilee of Queen Victoria was celebrated. After the terrible death of her husband the Grand Duchess devoted herself to the education of the Grand Duke Paul's motherless children, the Grand Duke Dmitri and the Grand Duchess Maria Pavlovna, and, that task accomplished, she became a sister of charity.

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She has founded a convent in Moscow, where she follows a severe rule and devotes herself to hospital work and the care of the poor, realizing that even a princess has no excuse to shirk the responsibilities of life and to lead a useless existence.

How is it that there is such a marked difference between the tastes of the Emperor and those of his uncles and cousins? The answer is not difficult to find. The Emperor's love of simplicity comes from his mother, the Empress Marie, who, now that she can indulge her own tastes, lives the greater part of the year in a small villa on the Danish coast. When I visited them there I found that they were living as simply as private persons who know nothing of the life of Courts. But, while recognizing the influence of his mother in the formation of the Emperor's character, I like to think that something of the spirit of Peter the Great has been conserved in the Imperial Family, and that the love of work, the courage, and the simplicity displayed by Nicholas II. are in some measure gifts from his great ancestor. One afternoon I drove out to the islands in a troika, a sledge that might have come from fairyland, covered with glistening trappings and luxurious furs, and drawn by three horses abreast, and on my way I stopped to visit the little house in which Peter the Great lived when he was building his new capital. It is a tiny cottage, a mere hut, with two rooms. Nothing could be simpler or more unlike the vast Winter Palace. Yet I felt, as I left this humble abode, that the spirit of the man who was content to live in it still reigns in the splendid home of his descendant, the present Emperor.

I have alluded to the courage of Nicholas II., and it may surprise those who only know him by repute that I should emphasize this trait of his character. I myself had often heard that he was timorous and dreaded assassination. It was therefore a great surprise to me to find that he often walked from the palace to my hotel, with only a single aide-de-camp in attendance. Although his grandfather had been assassinated by Revolutionists, he himself appeared to be absolutely fearless and to disregard the risk he ran by walking about St. Petersburg. If precautions are taken to protect him now, he permits them solely because he is convinced that his life is of value to his people. Russia is his one thought. Those who do not know him often speak or write of him as cruel, tyrannical, caring for nothing but the conservation of the Imperial power and wealth. That is an absolutely false estimate of his character. One has only to look into his beautiful blue eyes to realize that he is neither harsh nor cruel and to understand his great tenderness. Indeed, it is his tenderness that distinguishes him from most of the Sovereigns I know. His affection for his mother, his devotion to his wife and children, are the outcome of this quality, and its exercise is not confined to his domestic life. I have heard him speak on more than one occasion with the utmost feeling of persons who had been condemned to exile in Siberia. It was perfectly clear to me, from the way in which he spoke of them, that, had he followed the dictates of his own heart, he would have cancelled the sentences and pardoned the offenders.

The Emperor is perfectly well aware that my sympathies are with the democracy, but, naturally, I never attempted to force my ideas upon him. I am able to understand that a Sovereign who wields absolute power, and to whom the most powerful of his Ministers is obliged to yield, may be necessary for Russia at the present day. I am convinced that the world will be happier, princes and people alike, when democracy has triumphed; but I realize that in a country like Russia, the bulk of whose population are unlettered, it would be foolish as well as dangerous to introduce suddenly and without preparation methods which are successful in the West. Education, and education alone, can establish the victory of democracy. From my home in the capital of a great people, in whose motto is enshrined a profound belief in the brotherhood of mankind and the essential equality of prince and peasant, I look out over Europe and see the decay of old institutions and the movements which are slowly, but certainly, reducing those monarchs who still retain power to the position of decorative figure-heads. In Norway the process is already finished, and, although I confess that I was at first surprised, I was immensely pleased to find, during a recent visit to King Haakon and Queen Maud, that they were simply the first among equals. I am firmly convinced that this will be the ultimate form of monarchy throughout Europe, but long years must pass before the Russian people have the culture and political knowledge which makes a simple Norwegian the equal of his Sovereign. Meanwhile it is satisfactory to know that the man guiding the destinies of the Russian people possesses the fine qualities which distinguish Nicholas II.


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# Some New Discoveries in Natural History.

By JOHN J. WARD, F.E.S.

*Author of "Insect Biographies With Pen and Camera," "Life Histories of Familiar Plants," etc.*

*Illustrated with Original Photographs by the Author.*

## II.—A Tool-Using Insect.

THE Great Silver Beetle (Fig. 1) is olive-black in colour when seen from above as it rises to the surface of the pool to take in a fresh supply of air. Its under-side, however, appears to be lined with glistening quicksilver, owing to the fact that the air adheres like a flattened bubble to the soft, downy hairs beneath its body; and it is this air that the insect uses for respiratory purposes while below water; for insects do not breathe through nostrils like ourselves, but through a series of spiracles, or holes, arranged along each side of their bodies. It is interesting, too, to see the beetle renew its air supply. Its antennæ, or feelers, are flattened and hairy, and serve as ladles for taking bubbles of air from the atmosphere and applying them to its body beneath the water. The beetle in this manner obtains a fresh supply of air without leaving the water.

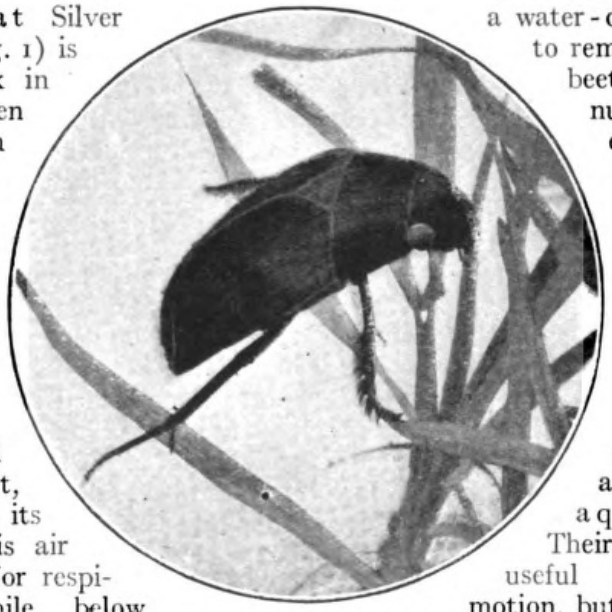


FIG. 1.—THE GREAT SILVER BEETLE.

Photograph slightly less than natural size.

It is a surprising thing, when one comes to think of it, that this insect, which is the largest British beetle with one exception, namely, the stag beetle, should have become a water-dweller. For we have to remember that the water-beetles, of which there are numerous species in every pond, are really land animals which in the course of their evolution have invaded the waters in search of food; they are, indeed, trespassers from the land. Nevertheless, they have now become very marvellously adapted for their aquatic environment. Their legs are no longer useful for terrestrial locomotion, but have become beautifully feathered oars perfectly adapted for rowing purposes. Although the modification of their limbs for aquatic conditions seems to have been no particular obstacle to their progression, yet they have always had the great difficulty to contend with that they were air-breathers, and, consequently, they cannot leave the atmosphere for long without returning for a fresh supply of air.

Under the smooth armour of the Great Silver Beetle is a pair of large and powerful wings (another proof that it was originally a creature of the air), and sometimes, after it has climbed a plant-stem, it opens its polished wing-cases and expands these wings and flies

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to seek a mate at a distant pool. It is a perfectly harmless insect and a most interesting and useful one to keep in a fresh-water aquarium, as, unlike some of the smaller water-beetle species, it is not carnivorous. At all events, it does not attack other living things, being for the greater part a vegetable feeder. I have, however, seen a dead gold-fish consumed by these beetles; their function in the pool seems to be largely that of scavengers, decaying vegetable and sometimes animal substances constituting their food.

The life story of the beetle is of more than usual interest, for its larval stages present many curious features, some of which I have reason to believe are recorded here for the first time.

The female beetle possesses at the end of her body a remarkable silk-spinning apparatus, and when she is about to deposit her eggs she first proceeds to spin an egg-cocoon (Fig. 2), which she attaches to a water-weed near the surface, a tall chimney-like structure being raised into the air above as a means of ventilation to the egg-chamber.

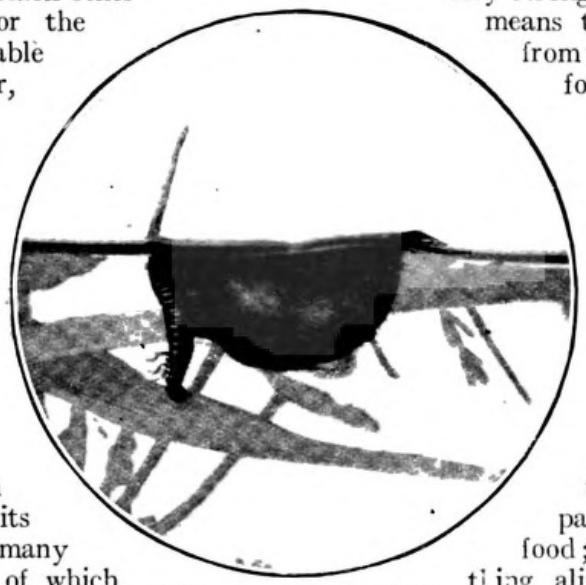


FIG. 2. — WHEN THE FEMALE BEETLE IS ABOUT TO DEPOSIT HER EGGS, SHE SPINS AN EGG-COCOON, SHOWN ABOVE, WHICH SHE ATTACHES TO A WATER-WEED, AND A TALL STRUCTURE IS RAISED INTO THE AIR AS A VENTILATOR.
Photograph natural size.

Some sixty eggs or thereabouts are contained in the cocoon.

If the weather is warm, at the end of fifteen or sixteen days a hole appears just beneath the chimney-like structure of the cocoon, and one by one the young larvæ emerging from the eggs drop through into the water (Fig. 2). The cocoon itself is made of very strong material, and by this means the eggs are protected from the attacks of numerous foes in the watery depths. Only on one occasion have I known a cocoon to be attacked, the attacker being an eel which bit it open and then devoured the eggs.

When the young larva appears its first movement is to search for something to eat. It is not at all particular in its choice of food; so long as it is something alive into which it can drive its pincer-like mandibles, and through them suck its juices, it is quite content. The meal not infrequently happens to be a brother or sister which has just emerged from the egg-cocoon and which has been taken unawares. Its appetite is enormous, for the substance of the large beetle has to be built up in a few weeks. In Fig. 3 two of the young larvæ are shown with a captured worm. It will be observed that they have their tails pointing upwards to the surface of the water, for it is by means of their tail appendages that the larvæ take in

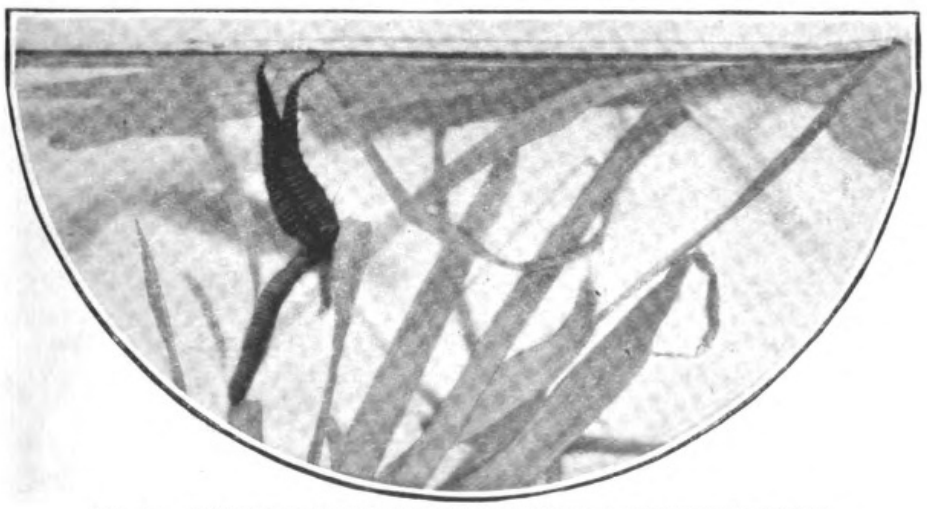


FIG. 3.—TWO OF THE YOUNG LARVÆ WITH A CAPTURED WORM.
Photograph natural size.

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their supply of air. If, therefore, a larva is strong enough to raise its prey to the surface of the water, it does not then have to leave it to continually rise to the surface to breathe. In the case illustrated the combined efforts of two larvæ have raised the worm to the surface, and the larvæ are feeding with their respiratory tubes opened to the atmosphere.

Likewise, when the larva desires to rest it comes to the surface and suspends itself head downwards. It is thus enabled to breathe while resting.

One day, while studying the habits of these larvæ, I made a very curious discovery. I found that before rising to the surface to rest the larva searches the bottom of the pool for a large pebble, which it brings to the surface held in its pincer-like jaws (Fig. 4). Sometimes the pebble would be too large for it to carry, and after struggling upwards about half-way it would have to drop it; but it would then immediately descend and select another stone of a more suitable size.

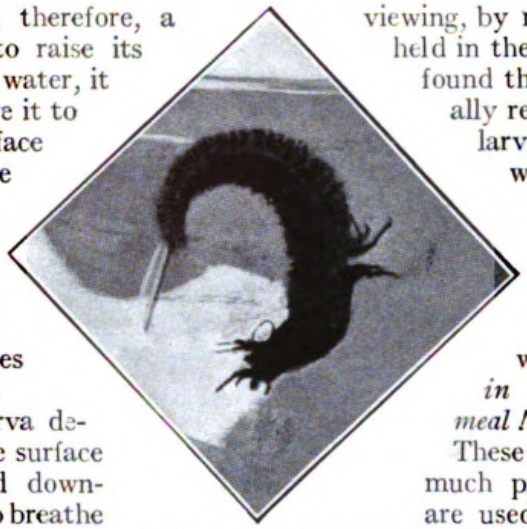


FIG. 4. — BEFORE RISING TO THE SURFACE TO REST THE LARVA SEARCHES FOR A LARGE PEBBLE, WHICH IT BRINGS TO THE SURFACE HELD IN ITS PINCER-LIKE JAWS.

Enlarged photograph.

This strange action puzzled me as to its purpose for quite a long time. Even the very young larvæ were seen to be occupied with the same work. What did it mean? Why did the larvæ work so hard to carry up to the surface of the water stones so heavy that it was often beyond the powers of their strength to raise them? The object of trying to reach the surface was clear enough, as only there could the larva rest and take in air at the same time. But what the use of the stone was remained a puzzle.

At first the thought occurred to me that the larva needed a weight to help it dive downwards into the water when leaving the surface. I found, however, that just before descending the larva dropped the stone from its jaws; hence that explanation proved useless. Then came a further discovery. While viewing, by means of a lens, the stone held in the jaws of a resting larva I found that it was being continually revolved. A glance at other larvæ showed that their stones were also turning round and round, like grindstones. Immediately the explanation dawned upon me. They *were* grindstones! The larvæ were *sharpening their knives in readiness for their next meal!*

These ravenous larvæ devour so much prey, and their mandibles are used so frequently for penetrating tough skins, that they become dulled with use, and to remedy that defect they have acquired the habit of putting an edge on their weapons by revolving a stone between them! Evidently, too, the larger the stone the larva can hold the better the purpose is accomplished; for it seems to be the ambition of every larva to carry a stone that is too big for it; probably a large stone grinds its mandibles better than a smaller one.



FIG. 5.—A LARVA REVOLVING ITS STONE BETWEEN ITS EXTENDED JAWS.

Enlarged photograph.

In Fig. 5 a photograph of a larva is shown revolving its stone between its extended jaws, which, it should be noted, open sideways, as is the case with all biting insects. It will be seen that the head of the larva is turned upwards, forming a hollow at the neck, into which when the stone slips from the mandibles (as often happens) it is caught, and can at once be replaced again.

Now this discovery is, of course, both interesting and curious, but it is much more than that, for here we have found a *tool-using insect*. Man has been described as a "tool-using animal," but instances of animal tool-users away from man are extremely rare, if not altogether unknown. When man used a piece of stone for a grindstone he invented a useful tool, but here in the depths of the pool this beetle larva had anticipated his invention probably ages before his advent. It is perhaps safe to say that it was the first knife-grinder.

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# The DIAGNOSIS

## By Austin Philips
### Illustrated by Warwick Reynolds

"YOU are coming!" said Maitland. "Of course you are!"

"I'm not!"

"But you *are*. I am going to take you out of London—away from these hot pavements and perspiring people, into a land of green fields and ancient customs and wonderful, picturesque garments, *dans le beau pays là-bas*. You are going to walk with a rucksack, wearing flannel bags and a shooting-coat, past Calvaries and menhirs and dolmens, and have speech with Breton peasant-women who kneel half the day in wooden boxes, washing their household linen upon flat-slabbed stones at the side of roaring streams. I shall disembark you at St. Malo and we will wander down through Loudéac and Pontivy, and on to Vannes and Auray, and then walk westward to Quimperlé and Pont-Aven. There I——"

"Oh, shut up!"

"There, I tell you, you will meet delightful women of your own, and other, nations; you will idle royally at the Café Maréchal and feast gloriously *chez* Julia upon imperial fare. You will wander, of evenings, making love to beautiful *houris* in the wonderful Bois d'Amour!"

"Shut up!" Nevile Stuart shook his head decisively. "I'm no more to be persuaded than I was when you tried last week. Get thee behind me, Satan! In other words, go home! I'm not coming. I mean it—absolutely flat!"

"Why not?"

"Because I can't afford it!"

"Nonsense. You're a fashionable surgeon. You're raking in the guineas, fast!"

"Possibly. But, my dear Maitland, you forget something else!"

"What's that?"

"The bills—the worry—the Old-Men-of-the-Sea debts. If it hadn't been for that lucky trephining operation upon Lord Grantford——"

"Yes?"

"I should have had to shut up shop and go abroad. Or bury myself in a country practice! What do you think of that?"

"I think it's quite possible. But I also think something else."

"What?"

"Why, that you don't put enough trust in your friends. After all, what will the holiday cost you?—a matter of fifty pounds. I'm good for that—for as long as ever you want it—and besides, I owe you something for doing you out of that scholarship at school!"

Nevile Stuart reddened, got up from his chair, walked over to the window, looked out of it, and spoke without turning round.

"It's exceedingly good of you," he said, coldly. "But I don't see why you should apologize for beating me fair and square. I'm going to sit tight all August and September and see the patients that come along!"

"Then you're adamant!"

"Absolutely." Stuart turned and faced his tempter. "You had the best of me always; you beat me by a neck all the time. But on a matter of sheer principle—I win!"

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Maitland got up.

"You're an obstinate fellow," he said. "And you're being a fool to yourself. We both need holidays—badly. But I know it—and you don't. There is a time when economy of money is prodigality of health—and that's your time just now. I give you up as hopeless. I shall leave alone—*viâ* St. Malo—to-morrow night!"

"Good-bye—and a pleasant journey to you. Or, rather, *au revoir!*"

Nevile Stuart, rising specialist and surgeon, put out a leave-taking hand. Guy Maitland—the risen barrister, M.P., future Attorney-General, and perhaps to be Lord Chief Justice—took it without a word; the lean legal face, bright eyes, and hatchet conformation contrasting strongly with the doctor's squarer head, less quick but more solid expression, and heavy, determined jowl. Then Maitland passed through the door which Stuart held open for him and out into the stifling street. Stuart looked after him, shut the door, gave a little gasp of regret and self-satisfaction, returned to his consulting-room, and sat down.

But he did not read; he sat thinking. His thoughts and dreams were these. How glorious it would be to go—as one summer, years ago, he had gone with Maitland—among Breton lanes and orchards; to see the trees laden with the ripening apples; to cross the hills above Huelgoat, to wander—not worried by women as Maitland had wanted him—seeking peace and quiet in starry midnights among the pines and poplars of Pont-Aven. But it might not be.

He and Maitland were sons of a doctor and a solicitor who lived and practised in a little town in Yorkshire where was an ancient grammar school, famous yet poorly endowed. The two boys, of the same age almost, strove against each other daily for eight years. Stuart was the steadier—though not in the least a tortoise; Maitland was the more brilliant, though he was steady as well. Stuart forged ahead in class-work; Maitland in exams. And there was but one "close" scholarship at Market Waighton school. Maitland won it—and went to Oxford with an open scholarship as well. Stuart lost it—and gave up his open scholarship because it was not enough, alone. He entered—there was nothing else for it—the local branch of Boyd's Bank.

But not for always. Stuart was of better stuff than that. For two years he worked steadily of nights at medicine, for the bank closed at three daily and its staff were free at four. Then—his elder brother provided for—his father sent him to Edinburgh, with the absolute need for him to gain a scholarship if he were to remain. He gained it in his first year—the Vans Dunlop. It carried him on until he gained another in his fourth. He took his degree at five-and-twenty—as Ettles scholar and the best student of his year.

Followed a course of research work at Vienna; then an assistantship to the Professor of Surgery at Edinburgh; then his Ch.M. (Master of Surgery) with a gold medal for a brilliant thesis on cerebral localization—the reward of days and nights spent in hard reading when not busy in laboratory and class. Then his fellowship of the Royal College of Surgeons, an application for Surgical Registrarship at King's College Hospital, the getting of it—then a standstill and a check. For three years unpaid hospital appointments, expensive rooms in Harley Street—which saw but few patients—and a bedroom at Shepherd's Bush. One ray of light only: Sir Charles Cunliffe, the great brain specialist—growing old and a little weary—employed him upon minor cases as understudy to himself.

Then fortune, swift and sudden, came upon the flood.

One night a great statesman met with a motor accident at Andover and lay unconscious in the local hospital, having fallen heavily upon his head. Sir Charles Cunliffe, promptly wired for, was away at Mentone, called there but a few hours back to a South African magnate lying stricken to death. Nevile Stuart was telephoned for; went, performed a daring trephining operation, stopped the hæmorrhage, relieved the pressure on the brain. The statesman—Lord Grantford—recovered completely, and Nevile Stuart's reputation was made. But he owed money everywhere—and this was but a few months back.

He worked for two hours or more, intent and occupied, concentrating upon his task. Suddenly he looked up. Before him stood the man-servant—the ex-soldier who, with his wife, acted as caretaker of this house, in which other doctors had rooms.

"Well, Swainson?" he said.

"A gentleman to see you, sir!"

Stuart glanced at the clock. It showed a quarter after six.

"A patient?" he asked.

"Yes, sir."

The man put down a card. Stuart picked it up and read.

"Show him in, Swainson," he said.

The visitor entered. He was a tall,

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well-built, well-preserved man, distinguished-looking, clean-shaven, and grey-haired. Stuart pointed to a chair.

"Sit down, please!" he said.

The visitor seated himself. Stuart swung his own chair round a little so that the light from the window should fall upon the other's face. The two looked at each other, each sizing the other up. The visitor was obviously measuring the outward and visible signs of the doctor's character and capacity; the doctor, with his highly-trained psychological instincts, was seeking to place his patient as regards calling, condition, or case.

Stuart spoke in the level voice of one who, naturally unimpetuous, has become even calmer than is his nature by reason of having learned how to wait.

"What is your trouble?" he asked.

The man answered in rich forensic tones. Whatever his occupation he was certainly accustomed to address large masses of his fellow-men.

"It is not for myself that I have come—and I will not waste your valuable time. Will you come down and see my brother? We are very anxious about him indeed. He has some malady, and we do not care to let any local man touch the case. Indeed, we fear it is some brain trouble—and I read, quite by accident, that paper of yours in the *British Medical Journal* the other day. Will you come out and see my brother, then?"

"When?"

"To-night. I have a dinner engagement followed by a business matter which it is impossible to forego. But if I call for you at eleven with a taxi, perhaps you will come along?"

Stuart hesitated a moment. The man's face was familiar. It seemed that he had met him somewhere on some occasion that he could not place. Then he lifted the card and regarded the address:—

MR. CHARLES RISDON.

THE LAWN,
ELTHAM, KENT.

He still hesitated. He sized up his visitor a second time; again he felt that he had seen him somewhere before. Certainly the man looked distinguished and clean-living, but strange things happened in London, and there were such people as swell-mobsmen about. Instinctively he recalled some such incident in Sherlock Holmes's Adventures—an engineer, was it? decoyed to the house of a coiner's gang! But he had a revolver; he would put it in his pocket and go.

"Yes, I will come," he said, suddenly. "But my fee will be fifty guineas. I must make that quite clear!"

His visitor bowed.

"That, in the circumstances, is quite reasonable," he said. "If one wants a really first-class opinion one is, of course, prepared to pay!"

He rose—showing again what a fine body and carriage he possessed. Stuart rose, too, and accompanied him into the hall.

"At eleven, then, Mr. Risdon," he said.

His visitor nodded; the front door closed on him; he was gone. Nevile Stuart returned to his consulting-room and sat down. Truly God was feeding the ravens; assuredly things moved for him; certainly his reputation was fast increasing; in a few months he would have pulled round again financially and be utterly free from care. He had almost the impulse to telephone to Maitland that he would come to Brittany. But he restrained it; he must make good before he could allow himself such joys. Had the fee been a hundred guineas he would have gone; but fifty—no, he must hold on and endure.

He went on reading for a little, went out for his dinner, and, instead of going home to his Shepherd's Bush bedroom, went back to his consulting-room to read. Just before eleven his visitor entered. Stuart had, more than ever, the feeling that he had seen him somewhere before. He was suspicious, yet ashamed of his suspicions, but intuitively he felt that this man, so distinguished and so personable, was all the time playing a part.

Stuart slipped a light dust-coat over his dinner-jacket and took a little box from a drawer.

"What's that?" asked the visitor, lightly. "Something with which to torture poor Tom?"

"No—my ophthalmoscope. I shall need to examine your brother's eyes!"

"Oh—quite so—quite so. The cab is waiting for us. Let us go!"

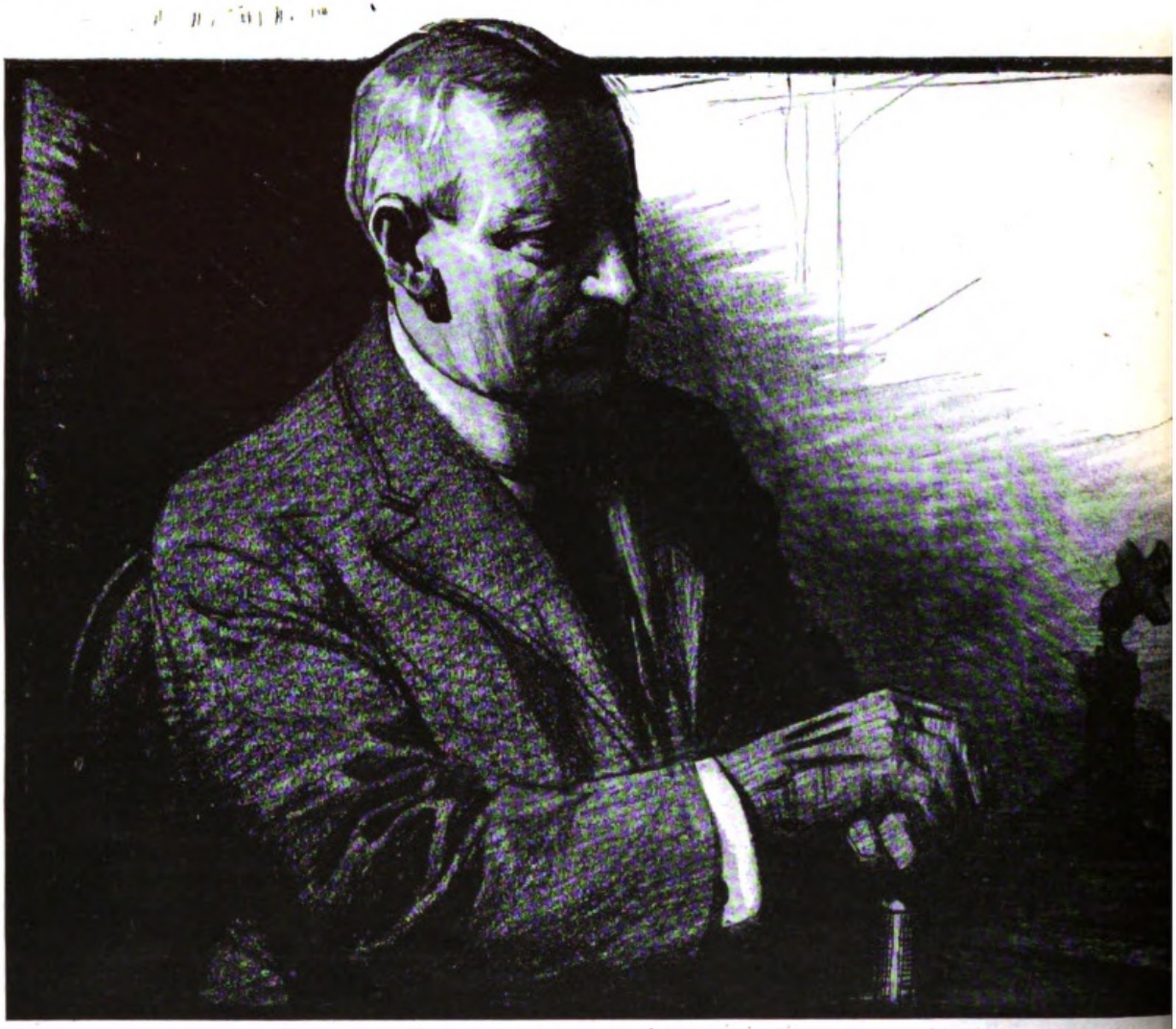
Stuart nodded and led the way into the hall; the two men got into the waiting cab. It swung down into Oxford Street, thence across one of the bridges.

"How long has your brother been ill?" asked Stuart, as the cab ran along the Old Kent Road.

"About six weeks."

"Not more?"

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"'YES, I WILL COME,' HE SAID, SUDDENLY. 'BUT MY FEE WILL

"Oh, he has been ailing for some months. But that is not quite the same thing. It is only recently that the headaches have been so fierce."

Stuart nodded. The taxi-cab drove on. They swung through St. John's and Lewisham, up a steep incline, across Blackheath, and up the Shooter's Hill Road. Mr. Risdon talked well and incessantly. Nevile Stuart, without any definite reason, began to feel faintly apprehensive, and to wonder what this flow of conversation hid.

Some way up the Hill the cab turned sharply, leaving the military hospital on the right, passing through Well Hall and coming to Eltham itself. Mr. Risdon directed the driver through the speaking-tube. They stopped before some large wooden gates.

Risdon jumped out at once.

"Here we are, doctor," he said. "This is the house!"

He paid the driver. The man did not drive off.

"Shall I wait, sir?" he called.

"Yes, please," said Nevile Stuart—and at that moment it seemed to him that he was safe. For they—the occupants of the house—could not do him much mischief with a man as witness that he had come!

Risdon led him through the gates, past a low, little white-walled lodge, like a toll-house on a turnpike road. The drive—which was short and circular, and had clearly another gate on the other side of it—bordered a half-moon lawn. The house itself stood before them with a fanlight over the door. Risdon opened it; Stuart followed him in. They stood in a long, low hall, in which stood a large refectory table, which was set for a meal. There was some very fine old furniture, but some of it wanted repairing; there was old silver and Sheffield and there were brass candlesticks in rows above the fireplace, and there was a big dresser with pewter on it, too. It all gave an impression of a curious and affluent Bohemianism, a kind of careless

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BE FIFTY GUINEAS. I MUST MAKE THAT QUITE CLEAR!'"

wealth—the more curious and remarkable to Stuart because he had never met anything quite of the kind.

His host shut the front door.

"Let me help you off with your overcoat, doctor!" he said.

"Thank you!"

Mr. Risdon, still holding the discarded garment, pointed across the room at the ancient dresser, on which stood a fine silver two-handled cup.

"That's worth noticing," he said. "It belonged to Sir Richard Grenville, of Stowe. He gave it to a gentleman-adventurer who saved his life. That's how it first got out of the family. No doubt they'd give a good deal to get it back to-day!"

Stuart crossed the room, took up the cup, and examined it with interest; he had a weakness for old silver and old furniture, and an instinctive appreciation of the arts—good pictures and good silver were things in which he had often promised himself some day to indulge. He examined the cup thoroughly turning it over and over, spending two or three minutes on the task.

"A fine piece," he said, presently. "A very fine piece. You are lucky to have it in the house!"

Mr. Risdon nodded. He was on the other side of the table with his back to the hat-stand, on which he had hung the doctor's coat. Stuart strolled back across the room.

"Well, what about the patient?" he asked.

"Excuse me one moment. I will just run upstairs and see if Tom is ready to be seen!"

Mr. Risdon pointed to a chair and hurried up a small winding staircase to the right of the front door.

Stuart did not take the chair which had been offered to him; he stood, instead, looking round this curious mixture of entrance-hall and dining-room, with its fine but imperfect furniture, lighted, as it was, by candles in great three-branched candelabra, and out of which half-a-dozen doors opened and the



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winding staircase led. A strong sense of mystery invaded him—and a slighter sense of fear. He felt that perhaps he was going to be involved in some crime or evil happening, that perhaps the taxi-driver was an accomplice in disguise. Certainly it was—on the face of it—a harmless enough house in a harmless enough locality, but there was assuredly about it something very sinister and strange.

He started suddenly. Footsteps were audible. Mr. Risdon appeared on the stairs. He was followed by a man of nearly middle height with a beard, strongly marked features, a curious resemblance to Dickens, and a very evident hump upon his back. Mr. Risdon introduced him with a dramatic wave of the hand.

"This is my cousin—Mr. Lightfoot," he said. "He is a friend—a very old friend—of Tom's. It was he, in fact, who insisted upon calling you in."

"Yes — pleased to meet you, Doctor Stuart"—the hunchback's voice was a curious mixture of falsetto and ultra-bass. "I dabble myself in medicine—quite as an amateur. I read your paper in the *British Medical Journal* the other day!"

Nevile Stuart bowed — a little stiffly. Charles Risdon gave a cough.

"Shall we go upstairs?" he asked. "My brother is quite ready now!"

"By all means. Just one second. I have to get something out of my coat."

Stuart crossed to the hat-stand, took a black case from the pocket of his dust-coat, and followed the two men upstairs. On the first floor a door faced them. Mr. Risdon opened it, and they went in. Stuart found himself in a room which was large, square, unusually lofty, and furnished in the same mixed manner as the room which he had just left. There was a fine Sheraton wardrobe with a large piece of inlay gone from the "shell" on the front of it; there was an oak hanging-cupboard with a broken moulding, two Jacobean chests of drawers with half their brass handles wanting, and an oval gilt mirror over the fireplace from which a great patch of gilt was gone.

In the bed—a small camp one whose frame of yellow wood contrasted strangely with the dark dignity of the surrounding oak and mahogany—lay an obviously tiny man.

"Doctor Stuart, Tom," said Mr. Risdon. "He has come to make you well!"

The tiny man made an attempt to nod—unsuccessfully. Nevile Stuart advanced. The tiny man placed a limp hand in the doctor's and smiled a faint, one-sided smile. He was clean-shaven, with a sallow skin, and his eyes had a peculiarly old and dissipated look. He was apparently sixty. But for the eyes he might have been taken for a man of forty, or even less. The expression of his face was one of apathy and gloom.

Stuart sat down on a chair at the bedside. He felt the pulse; he looked at the man very hard.

"Well, Mr. Risdon," he said, gently, "I should like to have a history of your case!"

"I will try and tell you"—the patient's voice was feeble. "But you must not expect me to speak fast!"

"Quite so." Stuart nodded, reassuringly. "Go as quietly as you like!"

The little man began to speak slowly and monotonously. He stopped occasionally; sometimes as if exhausted; sometimes as though to collect his thoughts. His brother and the hunchback stood at the foot of the bed.

"I have terrible, continuous, deep-seated headaches which make me so dull and stupid and melancholy that I want to die. I can't see as well as I used to. And I find myself weak in the left arm and hand!"

"Yes"—his questioner frowned a little. "Let me look at your eyes!"

Stuart, as he spoke, began to force up the eyelids in turn. He saw that one pupil was larger than the other—and he saw, too, the slight paralysis of the face—the right side—which is common under certain conditions when there is loss of power in the opposite hand and arm.

Everything pointed to cerebral tumour. The ophthalmoscope would make quite sure. Stuart picked up his black leather case from the side table on which he had set it down. He opened it—and gave a start.

"What is the matter?" asked Charles Risdon, from the bottom of the bed.

Stuart did not immediately answer. He looked at the empty case; he glanced at the patient; then looked steadily at the two men who stood at the foot of the bed. His lips were pressed; his face was impassive; but his eyes, which had first showed sternness, lighted up suddenly as if some thought, swift, agreeable, and illuminating, were taking life and shape in his brain. Then the light died again; and he began to speak, as if to himself, in a curiously aloof and absent-minded voice.

"I seem to have come away without my ophthalmoscope," he said, slowly. "But it doesn't matter at all; because I have already quite made up my mind. The symptoms are

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those of cerebral tumour—some form of pressure on the brain ! "

The patient gave a little movement. Charles Risdon and the hunchback glanced at each other. The hunchback spoke.

" Indeed, doctor," he said. " This is very serious. Can anything be done ? "

Nevile Stuart, as he answered, looked the man bang in the eyes.

" Yes," he said. " There is only one thing for it now."

" What is that ? "

" Surgical proceedings."

" Indeed " — Charles Risdon interposed now. " Surgical proceedings of what kind ? "

" Trephining. Let me explain. It is done with an instrument like this." Stuart took a match-stand from the bedside table and emptied out the matches which it held. " You see the orifice ? Well, imagine it to be a little circular saw. I take the match-



" HE STARTED SUDDENLY. FOOTSTEPS WERE AUDIBLE. MR. RISDON APPEARED ON THE STAIRS. HE WAS FOLLOWED BY A MAN WITH A CURIOUS RESEMBLANCE TO DICKENS."

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stand by the base — thus — invert it — and twist the orifice part round and round on the skull till a circular piece of bone is cut through. The piece is then lifted off and the brain treated as necessary. The operation succeeds frequently—in fact, as often as not. And your brother's condition is so serious that there must not be the slightest delay. I will telephone to the hospital immediately for an ambulance and a couple of men. I hope to operate within a couple of hours!"

"My God!" said the patient, raising himself on his elbow. "I can't have that, doctor; I——"

But Stuart did not hear him; he had pushed past the hunchback and Charles Risdon and was running lightly down the stairs. In the dining-room he snatched up the receiver and spoke.

"Nine, nine, eleven, seventy-five, Mayfair!" he said.

There were a few seconds of delay in getting through. Then he heard a voice at the other end.

"Is Mr. Maitland in?" he asked.

"No, sir. Who is it, sir, please?"

"I am Doctor Stuart."

"Can I give him any message?"

"Yes. Tell him I shall leave for Brittany with him to-morrow night!"

"Yes, sir."



"'YES,' HE SAID, 'THERE IS ONLY ONE THING FOR IT

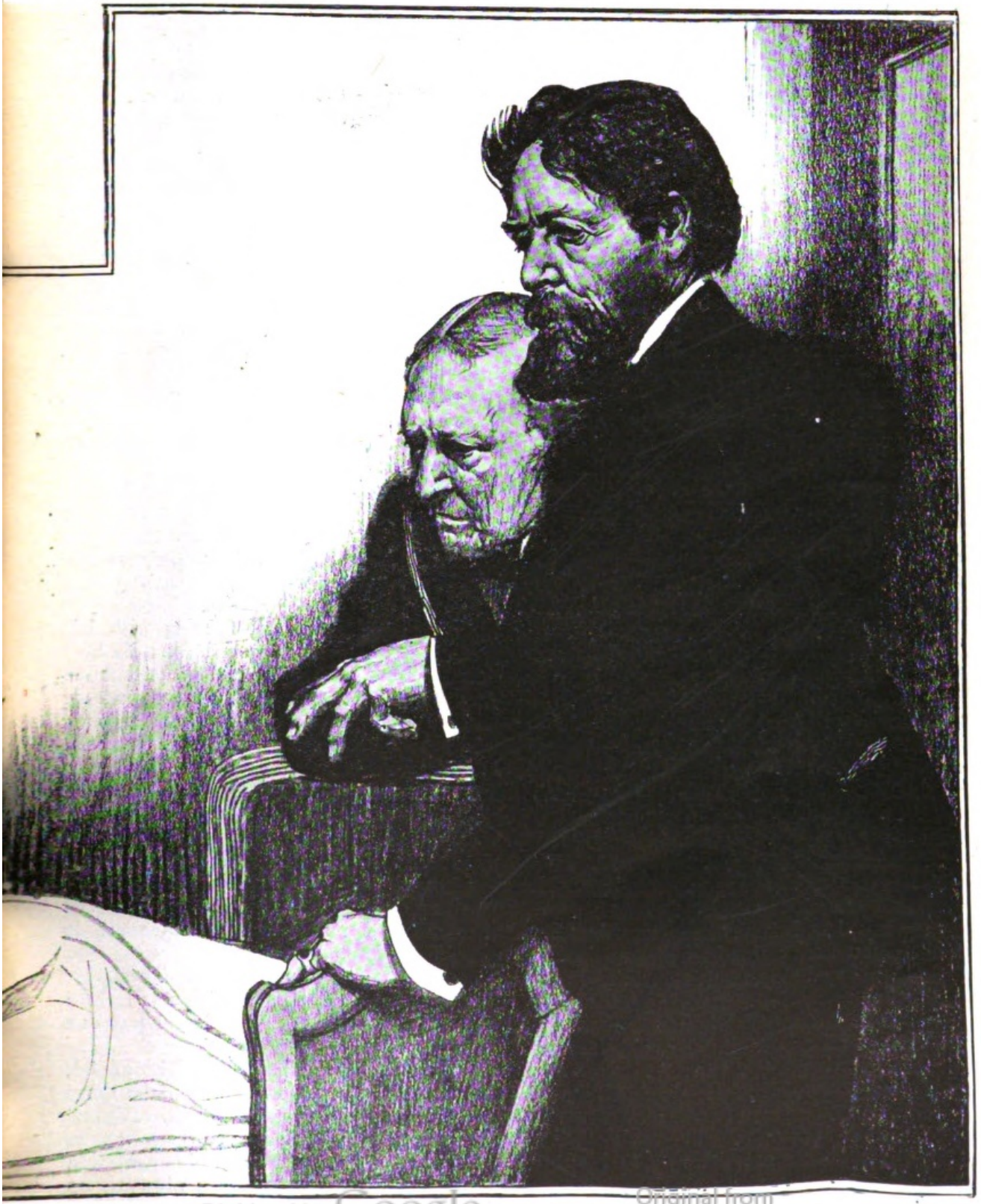
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Stuart hung up the receiver; he had but that moment finished when he heard voices and footsteps on the stairs. He looked round. He saw Charles Risdon, the hunchback, and a little man in pyjamas and a dressing-gown several sizes too large.

Charles Risdon and the hunchback were laughing; the little man seemed frightened and upset.

"You have made a mistake, doctor," he panted. "You have made a big mistake!"

"A mistake?"



NOW.' 'WHAT IS THAT?' 'SURGICAL PROCEEDINGS.'"

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"Yes." Charles Risdon broke in now. "You have allowed yourself to be hoaxed!"

"I beg your pardon!"

"Yes—you have, I tell you"—the patient's voice grew louder and higher. "There isn't going to be any operation. I'm not ill—and I never was!"

Nevile Stuart looked at him sternly. Charles Risdon was laughing out loud.

"I know you are not ill. You are James Trehearne, the comedian. I recognized you almost at once. Your 'brother' is not your brother, but the actor, Charles Cunard!"

The little man gave a gasp of surprise—and satisfaction; the hunchback's eyes brightened; the face of the self-styled Charles Risdon fell.

"Then why did you diagnose cerebral tumour?" he grumbled. "Why did you say that there must be an operation at once?"

"Because I thought that a little fright would do you no harm. Had I said at once that you were hoaxing me you might have denied it and declined to pay my fee. As it is, I have had enough of this nonsense. Give me the money, return me my ophthalmoscope which you abstracted while I was looking at the loving-cup—and let me go!"

The three men exchanged glances. All relief was gone from the face of the little man; he looked annoyed, disappointed, chagrined. Charles Cunard swore softly; but the hunchback's grin was broad. Then Cunard began to explain.

"It was for a wager," he said. "We were tied to London for August by engagements and fed up with things, and"—he pointed to the hunchback—"our friend here bet us we couldn't take you in. We haven't—though we read up the subject and rehearsed it—and we shall have to pay your fee!"

"Thank you. My fee is a hundred guineas!"

"A hundred? But you told me fifty!"

Nevile Stuart's sternness left him. He permitted himself to smile.

"My usual fee is fifty," he answered. "But that is when I am called in as a physician. I double it when I am called in—as a fool!"

The two actors looked at each other hopelessly. The hunchback came to their aid.

"This is all my fault," he said, smiling. "I knew you wouldn't 'have' him. I was betting on a certainty from the first. Don't you two worry. I will give Doctor Stuart a cheque for the full amount!"

The hunchback sat down, pulled out a fountain-pen and a cheque-book, and began to write. Stuart stood watching him grimly from the other side of the long, narrow table, trying to keep back both pride and satisfaction from his face. It was not easy; not without reason might he now feel proud and pleased. He had sustained his reputation as a doctor, and, in sustaining it, had earned sufficient money to enable him to share his friend Maitland's holiday upon equal, honourable terms.

The hunchback finished writing, tore the cheque from its counterfoil, and pushed it across. Stuart took it, looked at it, read it a second time, and started back.

"But this is a forgery!" he cried. "It is signed 'Guy Maitland.' You have imitated his signature—I know it intimately. He is one of my greatest friends!"

Cunard laughed boisterously. Trehearne gave a loud guffaw. The hunchback rose from the table and gave a tug at his beard. It came away. His wig followed it. He threw his coat off—and with it the hump as well. Stuart collapsed into a chair.

"Guy!" he cried, staring across the table. "Guy—what does it all mean?"

Maitland, in shirt-sleeves, looked back at him and smiled.

"It means that I think it worth while to pay a hundred pounds for the pleasure of your company on my Brittany tour. You will come now; I am positive. You cannot refuse to accept money which you have justly earned."

Stuart stood irresolute, fighting with his passions, crushing resentment back. He had seen red for a second; he had felt once more that secret, fierce, and old-time anger which he had known in boyhood when his friend, whom he had outdistanced in book-work, had beaten him at the end of the term. But it was no good being angry. He must accept the situation. In the lifelong duel between them he was beaten by the better man.

"I will come," he answered, slowly. "Indeed, I had just telephoned to you to that effect. I made up my mind about it when I decided to double my fee."

He paused for a second. Then—his jealousy gone from him—the bigness in him triumphing—he laughed aloud and put out his hand.

"You have won again, Guy," he added, gaily. "Indeed, whenever our paths cross each other I think you always will. It's the old quality which made you beat me in examinations—you've a touch of imagination—I suppose it's genius—which always gets you home!"

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# THE END OF THE JOURNEY

By MAUD STEPNEY RAWSON

*Illustrated by Edward S. Annison*

I.

LAUGHTER, music, light, and flowers told their festal story to all who cared to listen and gaze and loiter in Berkeley Square upon this superb evening of early June. Those who sat at home uninvited knew from the society papers that Mr. and Lady Mildred Carnhouse were making a special "splash" that night in order to celebrate the betrothal of their eldest daughter to the son of a duke. The eldest; at least, that is how overworked society journalists—after a hasty reference to Debrett or similar books of wisdom—defined her. Debrett, you see, was only concerned with Lady Mildred's affairs, not with those of plain John Carnhouse, the successful contractor, whose first marriage had been a disastrous affair, the offspring of which—a daughter—did not socially count. She was just—as Lady Mildred, after some years, peevishly described her to her cronies—an appendage of the family. That was made very clear to-night, for while Poppy, the bride-elect, Clarice, the younger stepsister, and Wansor, the young cub of a stepbrother, hovered close to Lady Mildred at the door when she received her guests, Anne stood apart, feeling, as usual, utterly unwanted, though doing her best to show friendliness and courtesy to any of the fashionable crowd who troubled to recognize her. Meanwhile her eyes looked hungrily over the upward-streaming mass of rich, bedizened guests on the stairs for two friendly faces, for the two guests in whom alone she took the least interest—Edward Jessop, the Government botanist, and Ray Hertford, the young architect, both of whom Anne had come to know during her philanthropic enterprises in connection with leading troops of bread-winning girls and women through the art museums of London.

From her slender height—for she was uncommonly tall, inheriting a good share of the inches without the bulk of her father—Anne Carnhouse could easily watch the stream of ascending heads. Placed there so aloof, so silent, so passive, the control which she had learnt to use in this difficult home life gave her straight nose, her well-shaped lids and long neck, her sensitive, closed mouth, almost a touch of sternness. Her stepmother hated that touch, felt perpetually aggrieved by it, exaggerated it. "Anne's sulky expression," she termed it. Lady Mildred happened to turn accidentally just now—to look for the viscount, her future son-in-law, and air him proudly—just caught a glimpse of Anne's face, and encountered her eyes. If, instead of turning away abruptly with the resentful glance she threw at the girl, her ladyship had waited a moment, she would have seen Anne's big blue-grey eyes grow warmer, a slight colour come into her cheeks, her lips part in a smile of welcome. For she discerned now the grey-haired, rather shaggy-bearded head of Edward Jessop, and signalled ever so slightly to him with her fan.

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He grumbled frankly at the crush, the environment.

"Glad to see you, Miss Carnhouse, but you have let me in, you know. I never expected such an appalling mob. It's ten times worse than those wretched conversaziones at my museum. One can get away from fatuous crowds there, at any rate. But here——"

At that moment a pushing chaperon, in a dress covered with metallic ornaments and a head-dress which included an enormous bristling osprey, set at a rakish angle, literally butted into the botanist. Her beaded *cabochons* bruised his arm, her osprey all but put out his eye. She glared; he scowled.

"Who on earth is that wild man of the woods?" she asked a tall military man, blazing with medals, who stood close. "Really, Milly Carnhouse ought to——"

The distinguished medallist shook his head and turned away—with embarrassment. For the chaperon's voice was high-pitched. Jessop had heard, and turned, fuming, to his real hostess.

"Who on earth is that bedizened squaw?" he rasped, furiously.

"I don't know," faltered Anne, softly. "Don't think about her any more."

"A wild man of the woods, indeed!" he gasped. "She ought to be in a museum case, with her——"

Then he began to cough. He had chronic asthmatic trouble.

Tender-hearted Anne, on the edge of tears, suddenly perceived the humour of it all, and rallied him nobly.

"She couldn't have called you anything nicer. 'A man of the woods.' It's beautiful!"

"A wild man," he corrected, between coughs. "And then the venomous way in which she said it!"

All the girl's compassion and imagination rushed in to his succour.

"That's because she was jealous," she pleaded, "horribly envious of you. She could tell at a glance that you are not of her world. It was the outcry against Nature, of which you have so often talked to me—the wretched, superficial attempt of the brainless, greedy part of the world of big cities, which revolts against Nature, to scorn those who live with Nature and work with her—as you do, Mr. Jessop."

Jessop grunted and shrugged his shoulders.

"She meant to be rude," he objected.

"Because she didn't know any better. Please"—she laid a slim, gentle hand on his arm—"please look at these pink lilies and tell me what they are."

His good-humour returned to some extent, and he forgot his asthma when his professional instinct was aroused. He put on his glasses, scrutinized the lovely sprays, and gave her the exact Latin name.

"Thank you. I sha'n't forget. I knew you would help me. That's why I stood just here by the flowers. I wanted you to look at them and talk to me—not to bother with the crowd."

He was gradually mollified, but his boredom had returned. The heat of the room affected him sorely, and he said so.

She guided him gently through the throng into the large exotic house, empty of all save lights and flowers, and found him a luxurious seat.

"Now tell me all about your new work—your great adventure."

He objected to that word.

"My great commission," he corrected, with patronage. "It is in connection with tobacco culture in South Africa." He launched forth into a long and learned dissertation which made her head reel. Her attention wandered. She was wondering what had become of her other guest—young Hertford—fearful lest he should be lost in the great crowd in the suite of rooms beyond. She became aware presently that she was giving random answers, making the wrong comments. Suddenly Jessop burst out into contemptuous complaint.

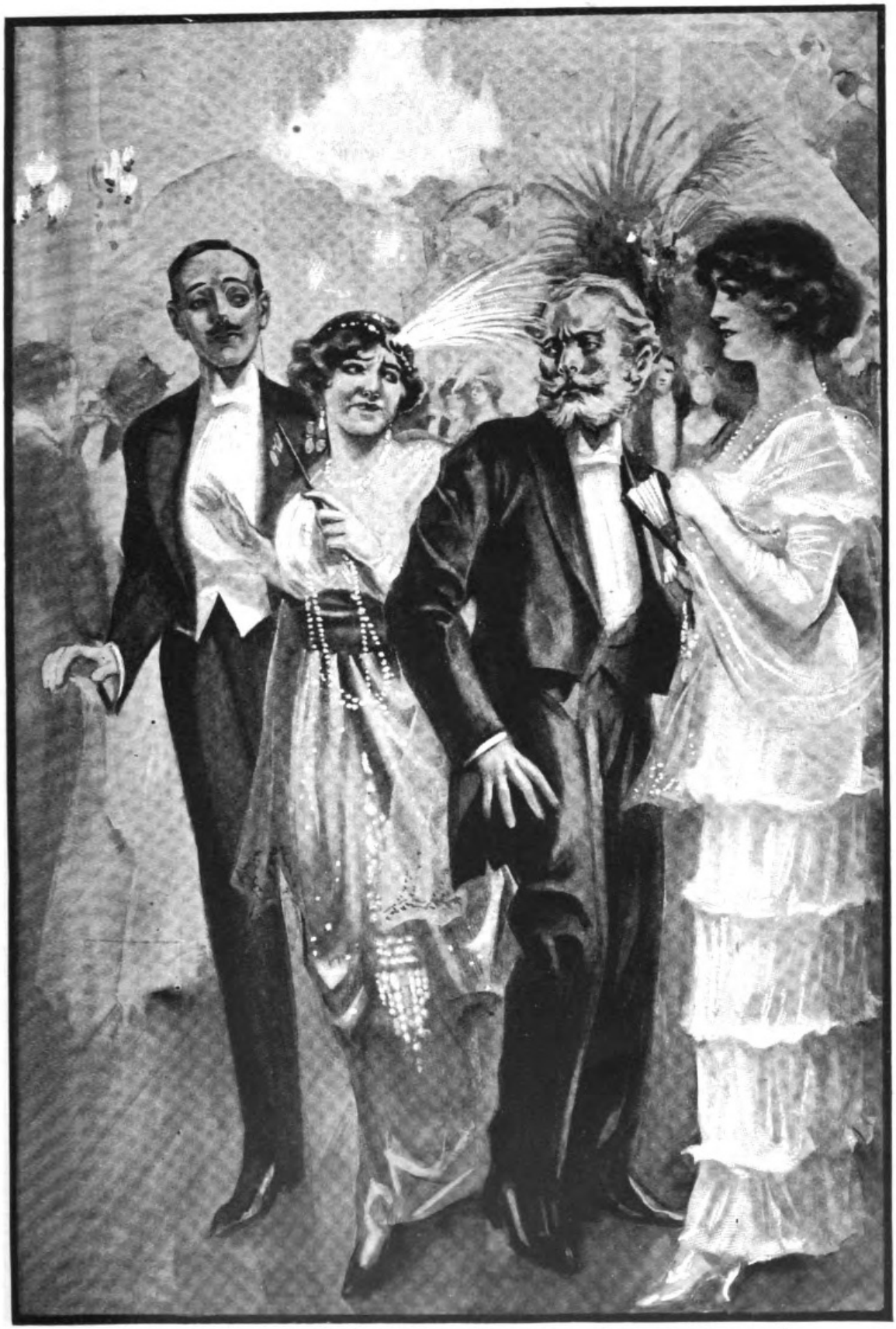
"Appalling people! Painted women—nearly every one of them. Overscented, too. What a world! How can you stand it? Why don't you break away?"

"How can I?" she rejoined, piteously. "And how can you, knowing the whole circumstances, put such a question to me—you who are free to go and come, and just travelling out into the big world with your work assured and your position so splendidly improved? It—it isn't kind of you, Mr. Jessop."

"I'm sorry, Anne. I didn't mean it." His rasping voice, never anything but rasping, was at least sincere. "I have realized all this very much lately. In fact, last week I nearly wrote to ask you if you would come out to South Africa. I hesitated — there were many difficulties in the way. I am not young, and of course I have to lead a very careful life, very concentrated. You understand?"

"I understand," she murmured, taken aback at the amazingly unexpected declaration, abashed by his sudden use of her Christian name, above all by the odd form in which he couched his proposal.

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"HER OSPREY ALL BUT PUT OUT HIS EYE. SHE GLARED; HE SCOWLED."

Jessop began to speak again, more assertively.

"At the moment—though my financial circumstances make it quite feasible—my change of work does not enable me to marry. I must establish myself in my new enterprise,

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give myself up completely to it. But after that I see no reason why I should not have a comfortable home to offer you. I cannot imagine anything more ideal than such a companion as yourself. Out there in the colonies, as the years go on, a man, even with more than a sufficiency of this world's goods, can be, I apprehend, excessively solitary. In looking ahead I feel clearly that your future is likely to be very solitary——" He paused and coughed, turning restlessly from side to side as if he sought to pierce an imaginary draught to the backbone.

"I shall miss you ever so much," she murmured, desperately, forced in some absurd way to fill the gap.

"I felt that you would," he rasped, triumphantly. "I am therefore glad now—yes, glad—that I was precipitate to-night. I have ventured at times to believe that you return my regard. Is it so?"

She drew a deep breath and looked down at the hand which covered hers. She was so sorry for him, so sorry for herself.

"I—respect you—very—much," fell from her. "You have been so very kind; but——"

"I am not an ardent man, I know," he interrupted, "still I hope that you will take your time to think over this."

"I don't—care in that way, Mr. Jessop." She all but added, impetuously, "Nor do you—really."

"Yet—yet you must see that in time to come you will probably come to feel differently—to see that we could really make a very happy joint life of it out there, Anne." He spoke impatiently, like a man accustomed to his own way.

Again she murmured, "You are most kind. I do feel most truly honoured by—by all this."

"Let us leave it there. Let us not be too precipitate. Let us continue our friendship. Later, if you feel lonely and find yourself in accord with my wishes, send me word and—and come out to me. Promise me that," he added, authoritatively.

"I promise," she said, gently.

"Meanwhile let us be friends as before," he jerked out. "Let us correspond and exchange ideas——"

Anne interrupted with a little exclamation of embarrassment, and rose. Jessop turned irritably to see a young man strolling away with his back to them, as if to re-enter the crush.

"It's Ray Hertford," said Anne, hastily. "Excuse me, Mr. Jessop. I asked him here to-night. I must go and speak to him."

"That chap? Why, I thought he had left England for *his* new job."

"New job?" She tried to disguise the pain and surprise in her voice.

"Yes. Didn't you know? His firm is sending him out to Madeira to see to the building of a big hotel."

"How—how curious!" faltered Anne, moving towards the conservatory door.

Her world, which had seemed a sufficiently tumble-down structure as it was half an hour ago, lay literally in ruins. The only two men she could count as comrades were simultaneously going clean out of her life—going forth to adventure, happy work—the right pegs in the right holes—going to found new interests, new circles, new homes, while she stayed behind, an aimless, drifting creature with no *raison d'être*.

She pulled herself together desperately. "You find it draughty in here. So do let us chase Mr. Hertford and cheer him up."

Chattering feverishly, with a hand on his wrist she drew Jessop after her into the first of the two big drawing-rooms, and saw Ray Hertford flattened against a wall, his eyes fixed moodily on a sea of strange faces.

Once more she signalled to the friend with her fan—but this signal had more assertiveness, was more emphatic than the last.

He had seen. He signalled back. His face lightened. He fought his way towards her.

"I thought you were lost—I hunted everywhere for you. Then I saw you in the conservatory—I didn't want to interrupt."

"We're making for the supper-room," prattled Anne.

"Take my arm," said Ray, with a glance at Jessop implying, "He must shift for himself."

The pack on the stairs made it impossible for any formality. They descended single file. Hertford's broad shoulders fought a way for them into the supper-room, and eventually seats were found in a corner, at a table already partially occupied.

Anne hoped that Edward Jessop would have the sense to remove himself. She wanted to talk to Hertford. They had, so far, only exchanged a few scattered sentences about his sudden departure for Madeira. She was deeply hurt that he had not told her of it. She resented the fact that Jessop should have known of it before herself. She could not understand Ray to-night. He was so dull, so matter-of-fact. Supper proved a disjointed farce.

"We—shall meet again?" said the girl,

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trying to be genial. She included Ray in her wistful glance.

"I don't think that will be possible," answered Jessop. "I have so many committees to work through, all my apparatus to pack, and my lawyer to see."

Ray said nothing. He looked down at the table. Then he produced a card and scribbled an address.

"That will find me—if you are good enough to write sometimes, and to let me write."

Jessop rose, very bored. The girl rose. Hertford, rising also, pushed back her chair.

"Then this is really 'good-bye,'" she said. She glanced hopelessly at the in-streaming pack of fresh supper-folk, at the thronged vestibule.

Too late she understood that Ray took her words as a dismissal. The three moved towards the door.

"Good-bye," said Ray. He gripped his hostess's hand. "May I write sometimes?"

"Yes—do. Tell me all about your work."

The naturalist pushed forward. The younger man could not but fall back. The difference between his handshake and that of the older man sent an odd feeling through her. Jessop's farewell was a mixture of peevishness and patronage. As he turned away and followed Hertford to the men's cloak-room he coughed.

She could not bear any more. Blindly she made her way upstairs to her own room.

## II.

SIXTEEN months later, on a raw, slightly foggy day in October, a tall girl stepped out of a large post-office in Mayfair and walked resolutely, but unseeingly, through the streets which led to Hyde Park. She felt at once like a criminal and like an audacious general. She had taken command of her life at last. She had done it—the thing which at first had seemed so unmaidenly, so impossible. She had cabled to Edward Jessop that she would go out to him.

There had been a final hot scene that morning between Lady Mildred and her step-daughter. Anne had recently discovered that through her unfortunate mother—divorced and long since dead—she had inherited a small income, amounting to just over two hundred pounds a year, and that on Lady Mildred's advice her father had kept control of this sum, merely doling out, as always, half of it under the guise of "allowance" for personal expenses. Anne had consulted a solicitor, faced her father, and quietly demanded the control of her little dowry. Lady Mildred had intervened, the lawyer had fought, Anne had fought—against her will. The matter was finally settled in her favour. But the result was open war between herself and her stepmother. For three months the girl had fenced with the situation, had tried, with all the control and charity she possessed, to gloss over the hostility and resume her former quiescent position in the life of the household. This was now impossible. The position had become untenable. Lady Mildred's taunts had goaded her to defiance. And so Anne had played her trump card that morning. She had whipped it out breathlessly, with scorn matching that of her adversary. She was still sick, blanched, shaking from it all. Her own words—which rang so boldly when uttered—hurtled about her own ears now like javelins. "When you say all these unjust things and draw your own conclusions about my chances in marriage, you speak as a fool. When you look forward to my being an eternal burden at home you are blind. I am going out to South Africa—to marry Edward Jessop. I know what I am doing. I am my own mistress. I will fag for you all no longer. I have a right to my own life. I need no help from you. And now—let there be peace between us."

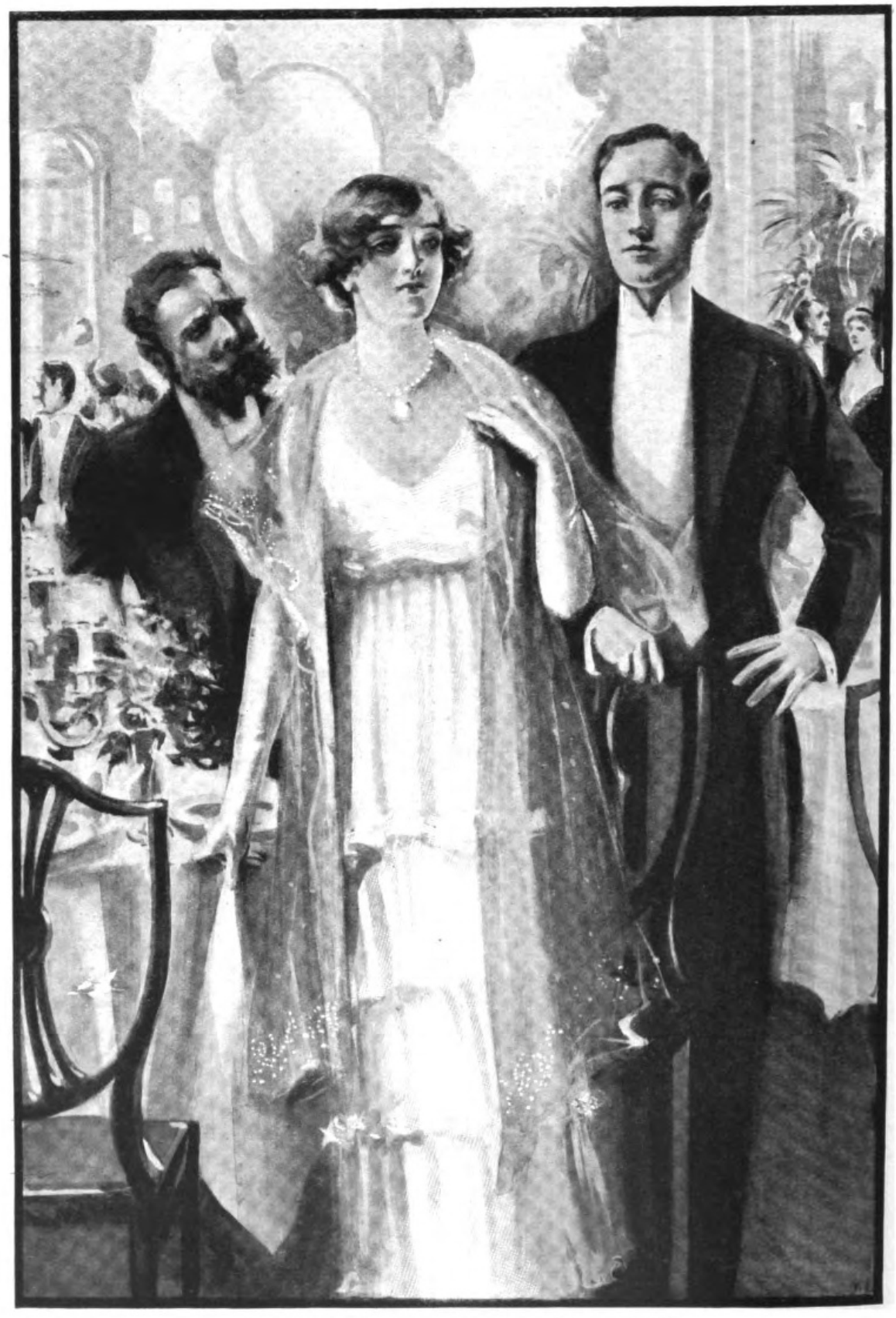
Her father was abroad on business. He would not be back from New York till she had sailed. She had cabled to him also as a sheer formality. He had not replied. But—he might be travelling.

It was only later that she found that her boat—the *Castalia*—halted for a few hours at Madeira. Two projects welled into her brain. One was precautionary. She cabled to Jessop again, giving him the name of the boat and the fact of this half-way call. Then the morning before she sailed—friendless, unescorted, unblessed, after a formal leavetaking from her step-family—she sent that other message to Ray Hertford: "Am sailing for South Africa to-morrow. S.s. *Castalia* calls Madeira." With that she stepped boldly into the unknown.

## III.

THE *Castalia* was a slow boat, small, and overcrowded. The voyage was tedious and stormy. Anne, after her stupendous decision and the stormy haste of her preparations, had succumbed to the reaction. All the bluff she had displayed towards Lady Mildred had melted. She felt herself undone, an outcast, and, while she had looked forward unspeakably to the brief halt at Madeira, she dreaded it—because of Jessop's telegram. What if it were not there to greet

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"'THEN THIS IS REALLY GOOD-BYE,' SHE SAID."

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her? Could she have the courage to travel blindly to that new, vast unknown land and throw herself upon his hands? Then a still worse fear, a more cowardly one, assailed her. What if his answering cable had arrived at her old home and had been forwarded on here to meet her? It would look so very odd. Lady Mildred would assuredly realize the truth—that Anne had sailed without waiting for the reply to her message. And if that reply should tell her that Jessop was not yet ready? Oh, the shame of that! It was unthinkable.

On the afternoon of the fifth day the *Castalia* passed suddenly into halcyon seas. The temperature rose. Steamer coats were being discarded. Women and girls on board went hastily through their cabin-trunks and planned what they should wear to-morrow on the few hours' trip ashore. There was a new feeling in the air—a benison. Anne slept heavily that night, like one who has made her peace with Fate.

Anne looked out and saw the Bay of Funchal at sunrise—tossed out her arms to the beauty of it, drank in the subtle, tropical scent welling from the unknown shores, and watched the little houses leap out from rich cobalt pools of shadow into the light at the sun's touch.

All was wrapped in a holy, fragrant silence for a time. And then the whole world woke up. The crew were vociferous. Little fruit-boats, full of half-clad, pearly-toothed boys, put out from the shore.

She dressed rapidly and watched it all with happy impatience. Which would reach her first—the cable from Jessop or the boat which brought Ray aboard to greet her? She hoped the first—because she dared not leave the ship till it came. Again, it would make her whole position so much more definite; it would avert all awkwardness. Her message to Ray had perforce been silent as to the real purpose of her journey. Would he infer that? What had he seen that night in the conservatory when he turned away from her and Jessop?

Clad in a new frock of white linen—one of the fairest items of her scanty outfit—a cerise belt, with a touch of cerise in a shady hat to shield her eyes from the tropical sunshine, she watched the boats which came ashore. Ah! that one brought mails. The despatches were duly doled out and appropriated. For her there was nothing.

She walked back to her place against the railing and looked with a sinking heart on the gay boats departing shorewards with her fellow-passengers. The purser came up breezily.

"Don't get left behind, Miss Carnhouse. Don't let the tripper lot poke you out. You said you'd want to go ashore. It's first come first served on these occasions. Let me find you a seat."

"Thanks; but I won't hurry. There is time." She stared across the stretch of cerulean waters, feeling an utter outcast. She unbuttoned her white gloves and removed them, glanced down at her spotless, dainty dress, and laughed in a ghostly fashion—like a creature condemned to be hanged. She felt herself positively indecent in this dress with the cherry-coloured details.

She turned and made for the head of the stair to her cabin. She would take off these things, put on some old rag in which she could spend a few hours on shore rambling—if Ray Hertford turned up. If he did not——

Someone caught her arm just as she stepped downwards. She turned to find Ray—very much bronzed and very bright-eyed—crying her welcome. The happy shock of it nearly sent her head-foremost. He pulled her up, and she regained the deck, laughing wildly.

"That's a nice way to greet me," he said, laughing as nervously.

"I had been looking out," she assured him, wistfully; then invented excuses, rattled on inconsequently. "Yes. Hard. But I thought perhaps you might be too busy—that you might, perhaps, meet me on shore."

"As if I'd let you come ashore all alone! Well—this is splendid. Such luck to see you, even for a few hours! I have the whole day off. I'll be your courier. I borrowed a little launch to fetch you off—the hotel launch—from my hotel, the one I have built. Look, there it is." He pointed from the deck to a great white building set high on a lovely promontory to the left. "Will you come and see it presently?"

"I should love it."

"I wish—I wish you could stay there for a night or two. It would be such an honour to have a friend sleep under the roof I had built."

She turned her face away from those eager, friendly eyes. "I wish I could, Ray. But the *Castalia* goes on to-night. We're due at the Cape by the 8th. We shall be overdue,—because of the rough passage out."

"And that will be the end of the journey?" he asked, staring into the blue horizon.

"Nearly the end. I have four hundred miles of railway travelling before the real end.

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"SOMEONE CAUGHT HER ARM JUST AS SHE STEPPED DOWNWARDS."

I am going—you know—I am going straight to Edward Jessop."

"I—thought—so," dropped from him. He tried to make his voice breezy and matter-of-fact. "I didn't mean to jump to conclusions, of course," he blurted on. "But of course I knew—you were great friends—that he admired you tremendously."

She steeled herself to reply: "He is very lonely. He is getting on so very well. His letters have been so full of scientific discovery. We shall be married, I suppose, pretty soon—after the journey ends."

"Oh, yes. Yes, of course. You must have had a great deal to do—to think of," he said, lamely. He looked over the side.

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caught the signal of the launch engineer, and, with a great effort at gaiety, turned to his friend.

"I don't want to hurry you ashore, but the launch seems to be hanging up other boats. Are you ready to come?"

"Quite," she answered, with frantic vivacity.

On the quay were crowds of rather helpless visitors beset by hotel touts. Hertford drew her away with a royal air.

"It is close upon ten-thirty. The *Castalia*"—he frowned and looked at the sea—"sails at four. Abominably early. That lands you back here just in the heat of the day and hurries you on board practically by three-thirty. I had planned a siesta for you in the hotel gardens and dinner in the veranda. I wanted you to see the night come down on the snow-tipped mountains, on the sea and the gardens and the delicious old plaster houses. Never mind. We must make the best of our time."

"We *will* make the best of it," she assured him, bravely, flinging fear and sorrow to the spice-laden breezes. "I'm in your hands. Where shall we go first?"

"Up first—straight up two thousand feet to a little mountain restaurant."

"Two thousand!"

"Don't be afraid. No walking is entailed. I should like"—his eye swept her figure boldly in a glance—"I should like to have taken you up all the way in something picturesque and beautiful—an old Portuguese litter or on horseback with old trappings, like those in the decorative section of the old museum. You remember?"

"I remember."

The colour flooded her neck and face. She dared not lift her eyes. Memory forced the tears into them.

"But there are no rich litters to be had. Tourists and museum men have bought up all those and all the old harness. And the horses and mules are none of them good enough or swift enough for us. We shall have to step into that." He pointed to a little platform ahead of them, where trippers jostled each other at a ticket office. And presently the little funicular railway swept them up to the heights above Funchal and shot out its freight on a little green plateau, whence a lane deep in flowers led up to the restaurant he had indicated. She surveyed the crowd with some dismay.

"Let us wait," she murmured. "I want peace—I want to think."

"Come this way," he suggested. They followed a path in the rambling garden of the restaurant, and found a little old bridge spanning a deep and exquisite gorge. Close by, on a knoll and covered with gorgeous flowering creepers, was an old dovecote, half in ruins.

"That's the place for *déjeuner*," he said. "Aren't you hungry?"

"I am," she confessed. But she was not hungry for mere food.

"That's first-rate. I'll go down and order up things. There's a little black boy in the restaurant who is a friend of mine. He'll look after us."

Just before his back disappeared she called and ran half-way to meet him.

"I want just to say—that I am expecting a cable any moment from Edward." She brought out the Christian name alone with an effort. "It was to be sent to the ship. I was waiting for it when you came. I must not miss it. I don't know what to do."

Naturally, he set down her eagerness to the inevitable cause—the impatience of a bride-elect. He tried not to let the cloud come into his eyes. He turned them away and answered briskly, "Yes, yes, of course. Of course you must have it directly it comes. Let me see. There's a telephone at this restaurant. I'll ring up the quay post-office and tell it to keep the cable there to be called for. Then we can look in on our way to my hotel later on."

Like two children they feasted, chattering, laughing, unconscious of delay between the courses which the negro boy, panting, brought up.

Presently the two rambled. She saw the wonders of the gorge, recognized the very tropical flowers which, in her voluntary labours for Jessop, she had helped to catalogue and dissect, and cooled her hands in the spray of little waterfalls under which fronds of wild maidenhair quivered.

Alas! Time seemed to have the pinions of a thousand doves. It was long past one before they returned to the plateau.

"Not the train this time," announced Ray, autocratically. "You must descend in orthodox tripper fashion and follow the ways of the country." He put her into one of the wooden sleighs which were in waiting to carry the holiday-makers down the steep, cobbled roadways of the island.

The two Portuguese who alternately pushed and guided the sleigh shouted like maniacs and shoved off. Away they went at a terrific pace over the polished *pavé*, between plaster walls blazing with flowering plants, onward

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and onward, apparently into the blue gulf of ocean below. Anne gave a little cry of fright. Ray slipped his arm round her. "Don't be afraid. These men know their work. And I have you tight."

Thereafter it was heaven—that mad, absurd descent. She just closed her eyes and let herself rest within the strength of Ray's strong arm. For a moment after they reached the level and swung to a standstill in a little *plaza* she could not move. Besides, Ray kept his arm about her a few seconds longer than was absolutely necessary. Then he rose, laughing, helped her out, and paid the sleighmen. She looked about her in bewilderment and wonder at the quaint houses, the old church, the booths. They were just what Ray had described in his few letters to her.

He pointed across the *plaza*.

"Down that little street is the post-office."

She nodded and set the pace. He waited outside the office, lighting a cigarette.

She came out empty-handed, perplexed, her head surging.

"I had better wait—a little," she said, curtly.

He promptly decided the matter.

"That is out of the question. You can't stay in this hot, fly-ridden *plaza*. I'll leave word that the cablegram is to follow you to the Parnassus Hotel any time till three-fifteen. After that it must go to the *Castalia*."

She acquiesced helplessly, gladly, wrenched her thoughts away from the suspense and fear, and lent herself once more to gaiety.

He left the message, hailed one of the curious old bullock-carts with awnings, which wait for visitors, and they mounted slowly to the Parnassus. The way lay once more between old walls topped with glorious flowering trees, walls raining creepers. Heaven seemed to be pouring colour down upon Madeira.

The Parnassus, white and cool, classic and stately, shone suddenly from its promontory upon her dazed eyes. Ray explained its story. It had been originally founded by a rich merchant as a large villa in the old Portuguese style; it was, in fact, planned as a tiny palace. But he had not lived to inhabit it, so his executors had sold it to a company which needed a new hotel site. Then had come Ray's task—the amplification of the building, the addition of ballroom, billiard-room, bedrooms, offices, stables, the architectural planning of the garden, including stone terraces after the design of a seventeenth-century pleasaunce near Lisbon.

Anne steeped herself in the story of it all, warmed her heart at his fire of artistic enthusiasm. The gardens alone nearly made her weep with their stately beauty. Would she find anything so wonderful at the journey's end? Would the vistas be as magical, the sea so blue, the flowers so celestial? Would the natural magic—the spell of mere colour, scent, ocean, gorge, and mountain—still hold? She tried to picture it all without Ray's presence. For the moment she sat alone—for he had been summoned back to the hotel. She imagined the surroundings as they would be in complete solitude. A deep stab of pain was her reward. But, stay—with Jessop she would also enjoy the human interest in the world. With him would she not share happily such beauty, all too great for a lonely heart? A second deep lance-thrust of pain answered that inquiry. Her heart cried: "Will you ever be able to share anything truly with such a man as he?"

She rose from the seat with the intention to escape from herself, to reach the hotel and let its vivacious holiday atmosphere blind her to all else. She dared no longer be alone with Ray. She dared not think. Her only safeguard lay in whiling away the rest of the precious time in some more or less crowded place where the ordinary things of ordinary life would give her courage to keep to her scheme and indulge in no emotions.

She missed the path and walked round and round among the hibiscus bushes. Through a gap of crimson and purple she suddenly beheld the steep path from the veranda by which Ray mounted. He was walking hastily. In his hand was a letter. She turned and fled—back to the stone seat, leaned against it, stretching out one hand for the message. He delivered it and walked away to some distance, making a half-turn, as he went, to say casually, "The messenger would not wait. But the hotel boy can take your reply. I thought—you see—that you would be sure to want to send some message."

He marched on, whistling ostentatiously, to examine one of the stone vases of the upper terrace.

"No answer," she called.

He returned slowly.

"All satisfactory, I hope!" he cried, bravely, as he came up. "I want to—congratulate you. I have been very backward and stupid. Forgive me, Anne. I hope you'll be the happiest of women. And you will, you must be. You were made for happiness. God bless you—Anne."

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She pushed away his hand. With a bitter cry of anger and pain she rose and walked to the edge of the terrace, praying the Atlantic to engulf her.

"Anne—it's not bad news? You—you've dropped the cablegram." He proffered it again.

"Read it," she whispered. And he read the strange, curt message of repudiation.

"Do not come out on any account. Unable to receive you.—E. J."

Ray, too, dropped the letter as if it had stung him. He swore below his breath. Then, in a flash, he saw the girl's gaze fascinated on the dizzy blue depths below, the broken droop of her figure.

"Anne—my dear—I'll half kill Jessop for this!"

"What is the use of that?" she mocked.

"You—care for him, Anne?"

"I thought I cared—enough. It was arranged that when I made up my mind I was to cable."

"But this is dastardly of the fellow."

"No, no—don't call him names. Perhaps—it is the best that could happen. I was a fool. I——" She broke off, unable to make the humbling confession.

"But his letter, Anne? Didn't he make it clear that he—that you——?"

"He never writes love-letters. It wouldn't be like him to do that. His letters have been full of his work—nothing else."

"But—there was an understanding?"

"He asked for my promise before he left. I made up my mind suddenly. There was frightful trouble at home. I thought he would want me more than my people did. They have never wanted me. So I cabled—and"—she sank down on her knees, a-heap, a piteous, abased child—"I cabled—and there was no reply—I thought he must be away. He has been away, you know. This telegram comes from somewhere up-country. So I started without hearing from him. I had told my people I was going to him. Don't you see? And I meant to go—I thought—so I made a leap in the dark. And now"—she pulled herself together and rose—"I *must* go on, Ray. I can't go back to England. I shall go on to the journey's end." She flung back her head with glorious, desperate pride in her eyes. "Edward does not want me. But I shall go on. I shall build up my life out there. I shall find people who need help. I shall——"

Ray pinioned both her hands. "*This* is your journey's end!" he cried. "I love you, Anne. I dared not tell you last year. I had nothing to offer you. And to-day—till now—it wasn't fair to Jessop. But now I can see my prospects ahead. And you—you've come over the sea, and you're my prisoner, my darling. It isn't quite as I pictured it. I dreamed of coming over the sea to you—to bring you back here. All the silly nonsense I talked this morning about the litter and the horse with old trappings was part of the dream. But you have made a new dream for me. For you're here." He drew her down to the stone seat.

"I—feel horrible," she sobbed. "My very soul seems naked."

"My arms hide you from the world. Take my love and make of it a cloak for your soul—a hundred cloaks. Anne—if this is to be the journey's end, give me your lips!" he whispered.

They sat there forgetful of all things, amid the dazzling sunlight and crested birds and splendid flowers, till a long whistle from the bay roused them both. Ray glanced at his watch, gazed through his field-glasses, and gave a shout.

"That's the *Castalia's* first hooter. Good heavens! We must board her and get your luggage off. Just twenty minutes to do it!"

Thus did his dream come true. For that night the lady of his dreams, walking ever in a maze of wonder and ecstasy, sheltered under the roof that he had built. The earth had turned to fairyland. The halcyon sea was full of legends. The bells of the tropical flowers rang chimes. The stars were jewels set in a roof of crystal, the dome of a great, holy house made for lovers.

It was hard to say good night early after that royal day. But Ray had business to do at the Consulate—very important official business concerning them both. He would brook no delays.

Still dressed, she sat by her window, throwing wide the jalousies. The moon looked in, and over her balcony climbed creepers. The moon glanced upon a flower so large that it was like a little fallen star. She put out her hand to it, and found it to be a large jasmine—the white jasmine of the tropics. She gathered it with a prayer which turned into a little song. And Ray, passing from the shadow of an oleander on his way to his villa rooms beyond the gardens, saw and heard her and blessed the day and the night and the earth—and the great sea that had brought her to him.



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# A Royal Chess Contest.

## By T. B. ROWLAND.

### This Original "Chess Poem" contains Nine Problems.

HIGH on a mound in Normandy
A castle old looked o'er the sea.
Two sovereigns its possession sought,
And there they met, and there they fought.

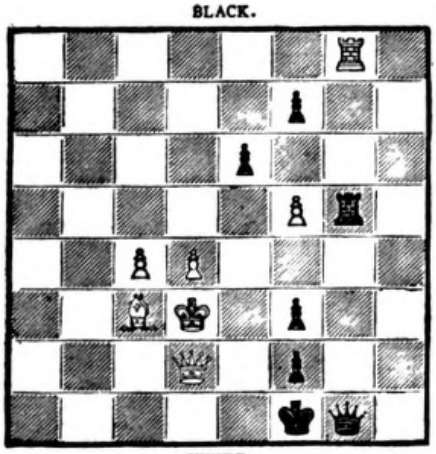
Without was heard the battle's din,
The tumult of a fight to win,
The roar of guns, the fierce command,
The clash of fighting hand-to-hand.

The rival kings, within the gate
That closed the fort, held fierce debate.
While on a table placed between,
A set of chess by chance was seen.

"A tournament," one monarch cried,
"Will end dispute, the war decide."
"Agreed," the other boldly said.
"The stakes, my throne against your head."

So, while the foes attack, defend,
The kings within with chess contend.
Dame Fortune favoured neither side,
Till White a victory espied.

BLACK.

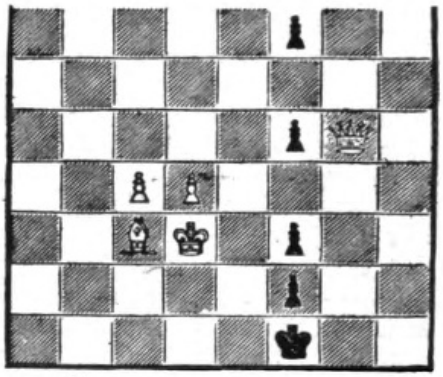


WHITE.

"WHITE A VICTORY ESPIED."

With rook takes rook, White threatens mate;
Black, taking rook, averts the fate.
Then queen takes queen. Alas for Black!
With pawn takes pawn he yields attack.

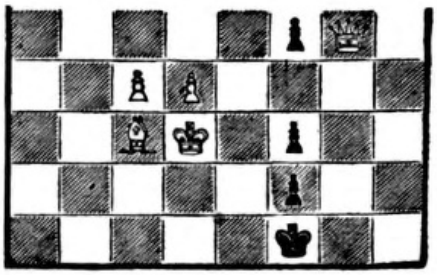
The odds are great, but still Black may,
By queening pawn, yet gain the day;
But no, his filed pawns fail to free
The sable king from mate in three.



"HIS FILED PAWNS FAILED TO FREE THE SABLE KING FROM MATE IN THREE."

E'er White can seal his foeman's doom,
A bullet shrieks into the room.
It strikes the board and shatters there
The man that holds B.'s second square.

The mate is gone, White's hand is stayed,
But he again the board surveyed.
When, lo! he finds another way,
With yet three moves, the foe to slay.



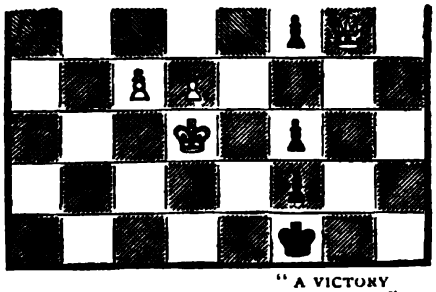
"WHITE FINDS ANOTHER WAY, WITH YET THREE MOVES, THE FOE TO SLAY."

Again amidst the battle's din
A messenger of death comes in.
It strikes the B., which, falling low,
Deals to the *coup* a fatal blow.

Spellbound is White, his conquest gone;
His brow is sad, his cheek is wan.
But soon he sees a victory
By yet another mate in three.

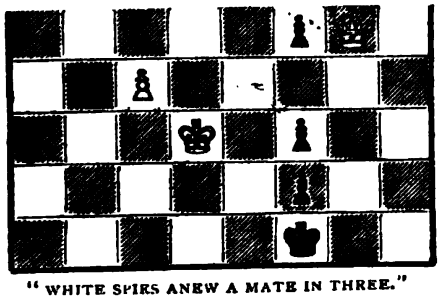
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Triumphantly he reaches o'er
To deal the blow, but, as before,
A ball comes in, it strikes queen's pawn.
Black's free again, the mate is gone.



"A VICTORY BY YET ANOTHER MATE IN THREE."

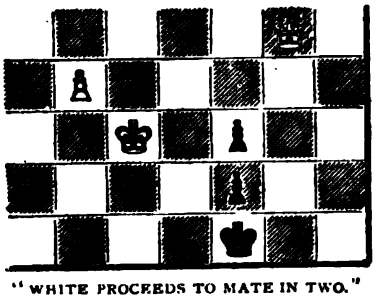
Astounded, White looks o'er the field.
Black's hope revives ; he will not yield.
So White invokes the powers that be,
And spies anew a mate in three.



"WHITE SPIES ANEW A MATE IN THREE."

The tide of war is at its height.
Another shot takes inward flight.
Another man falls to the floor.
It is Black's pawn at KB4.

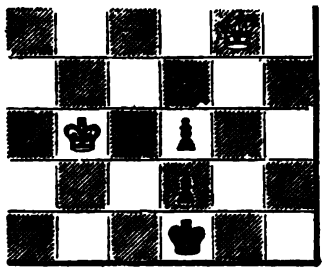
Oh, woe to Black ! His doom is sealed.
White holds command of all the field.
That day the sable king must rue,
As White proceeds to mate in two.



"WHITE PROCEEDS TO MATE IN TWO."

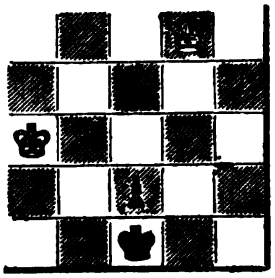
Again mishap to White befell,
As scribes of old delight to tell.
On reaching o'er to give the mate,
His pawn it shared its fellow's fate

So, by the God of War devised,
Again the mate was paralyzed.
However, White, with courage new,
Again proceeds to mate in two.



"AGAIN PROCEEDS TO MATE IN TWO."

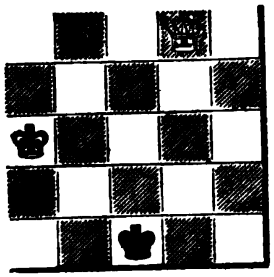
Another shot, another fall,
Pawn at B6 receives the ball.
So with the queen alone, 'tis true,
White still can give the mate in two.



"WHITE STILL CAN GIVE THE MATE IN TWO."

White knows no fear nor yet dismay,
As he again essays to play.
But now there's only left to tell
How by a ball the last pawn fell.

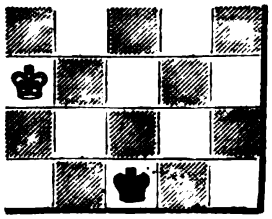
In spite of war, in spite of fate,
White finds anew a two-move mate.



"WHITE FINDS ANEW A TWO-MOVE MATE."

A final shot lays low the queen,
And brings a wondrous change of scene.

The bugles sound, the war is o'er,
The clouds roll by for evermore.
So, as the sun succeeds the dawn,
Does peace succeed this battle drawn.



"THE BATTLE DRAWN."

*Solutions in next Number.*

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# The CANTERBURYS' GARDEN

By FREDERICK GROVER

Illustrated by Treyer Evans

I.

THE moment Mrs. Canterbury stepped into the garden she was amazed at her foolhardiness in having employed Jeremy Hobbs. What ever would Mark say?

That morning Mr. Canterbury had risen from his couch in one of his "bad" moods. Nothing had pleased him. Finding he had overslept himself, he had threatened the maid-of-all-work with instant dismissal for having overslept herself. Having trodden on his wife's pet Persian he had talked of drowning it, because the "wretched animal was always getting under people's feet."

Then, to cap it all, just as he had hurried away from the breakfast-table and his wife's morning embrace, whom should he encounter but an elderly jobbing gardener, who, basket and tools over shoulder, presented himself at the gate, and, impeding Mark's flying exit, offered his services for the day.

There was no profession that Mark, at the best of times, respected less than the jobbing gardener's. He had once been deceived by a thirsty member of the calling, and so his reception of this astonished newcomer was brief and volcanic in character.

Old Jeremy Hobbs, however, had not budged. He had stood there calmly waiting, until the storm was spent, and he could obtain a hearing. Mrs. Canterbury, who detested scenes, meekly urged her husband not to lose his train, and Mark, who was wont to describe himself as a "demon for punctuality," seeing the force of her reminder, had reluctantly to leave his wife to "polish off" the impudent intruder.

"Don't stand any of his nonsense," he jerked out, as he departed, looking like a god of war. "If he won't go, send for the police."

Mrs. Canterbury, instead of sensibly retreating indoors, had dallied at the gate, thoughtfully regarding the card which the gardener had handed her. "Jeremy Hobbs, Landscape Gardener. F.R.H.S."

He seemed an appealing old fellow, quite superior, in fact; and now she came to think of it, he was the walking image of her Uncle Japhet. He was so cheery and calm. He looked almost handsome, standing there in the autumn sunshine, a jolly tinge of red in each weather-beaten cheek, and his hair as brown as any boy's. How unbearably rude Mark had been. She felt bound to make amends.

"My husband is very hasty," she said. "He doesn't really mean it."

And then, a moment or two later—how it happened Mrs. Canterbury never quite knew—Jeremy had gone through with her to the garden at the back, and was surveying it critically, whilst she was filling with shame at the struggling shrubs, the dank grass, and the weed-choked beds.

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"It's a nice size," he said, at length. "What a pity to neglect it. A place like this saddens me."

"My husband hasn't much time for gardening."

"Something more than time is needed," said Jeremy, with dignity. "It's knowing what to do, and how to do it. Gardening is a gift. I'm always happy in a garden. Flowers are so beautiful that it seems only right to encourage them all we can."

"I should like to have a garden full of flowers," sighed Mrs. Canterbury.



"'DON'T STAND ANY OF HIS NONSENSE,' HE JERKED OUT, AS HE DEPARTED. 'IF HE WON'T GO, SEND FOR THE POLICE.'"

"Well," Jeremy had said, "we must see what we can do."

He then removed his coat, and a distant look came into his eyes, as though he were an artist about to put the first strokes on a new canvas.

"But——" demurred Mrs. Canterbury.

Then Jeremy had struck his spade vigorously in the ground, and Mrs. Canterbury had retreated indoors, feeling it was beyond her powers to get rid of him, and comforting herself with the reflection that it would take weeks to make any impression on such a garden. Busy with her beloved household duties, she had forgotten Jeremy, until late in the day, when realizing that he must be away from the house before Mark's return she had gone to pay him his wage and dismiss him.

It was then that the full force of her disobedience came home to her. Mark was bound to discover it. The garden was a different place. What would he say?

At her approach Jeremy looked up from his work, and leaning upon his spade eyed with quiet satisfaction all he had done.

"Have I taken too much liberty?" he said, smiling at her consternation. "There's a-plenty to do yet; but I don't think a younger man would have done more."

"It's a great improvement," admitted Mrs. Canterbury, but without enthusiasm.

"Flowers will grow here now," said Jeremy. "The soil is right enough; it needed digging. You don't use the hoe."

For the first time since it had been theirs the garden was trim and clean. But the very thoroughness with which the work had been done threw Mrs. Canterbury's

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indiscretion more strongly into relief. The beds, now that they were free from weeds, seemed woefully bare.

She looked about her, and suddenly with a growing sense of panic pointed to a dwindling bonfire.

"What have you been burning?"

"Weeds and dead plants."

She looked around her again, as though she missed some accustomed thing.

"Why," she said, breathlessly, "you have never destroyed the rose-trees—and the delphiniums! My husband bought them at a sale."

"They were all dead, and of course I burned them."

"But Mr. Canterbury said the plants were making root, and hadn't many leaves in consequence. He was looking at them last Sunday."

Jeremy's eyes twinkled with merriment.

"That was a little mistake of his, I'm afraid. You would never have had roses off those trees."

Whatever Mrs. Canterbury believed, she knew that nothing would convince Mark; he would simply accuse Jeremy of wanton destruction.

"Oh, why did you do it?" she said, tearfully.

"They were all dead," repeated Jeremy, still smiling.

This did not console her.

"We must get fresh ones to put in, that's all." It was a poor expedient, and unlikely to prevent Mark discovering the truth. But what else could be done?

"I intended to bring round some plants," said Jeremy, as though he had taken complete charge of the garden. Eloquently, then, he dilated upon the virtues and beauties of flowers, like a merchant displaying a treasury of precious gems. Dazzled with the wealth of his knowledge, Mrs. Canterbury found herself ere long meekly following him from point to point in the garden whilst he poured out suggestions which she could see no chance of accepting. Mark would as soon think of setting up a roundabout as of consenting to such an extensive scheme of alterations and planting as Jeremy confidently outlined.

Daffodils, tulips, peonies, roses, sweet-peas, phloxes, pyrethrum, chrysanthemums, gaillardias, delphiniums, lilies—Mark's first chilling question would be: "And who is to pay for them?"

Such, however, was the sweetness of Jeremy's tongue that Mrs. Canterbury wished in her heart she could persuade Mark to listen. She would find the money somehow.

"Now, here," said Jeremy, pausing at a corner of the lawn adjacent to the dilapidated dustbin—"here I would dig a bed, seven by six." He struck his spade prophetically into the turf.

"My dear man," said Mrs. Canterbury, "my husband put sixpennyworth of grass-seed in there this summer; you mustn't touch that."

"A shrub or two and some delphiniums and lilies would do very well there," he went on, calmly. "I think I should put a piece of trellis at the back, with a climber over it."

"Trellis! My husband hates trellis. He put some up once, and it blew down."

Jeremy turned his back to the house and looked down the garden.

"That apple-tree must come out; it's done for. I didn't have time to get it up to-day."

Mrs. Canterbury gasped. It had borne two apples that year, and Mark had talked about them for weeks.

"Whatever you do," she said, "touch nothing else until I have talked to Mr. Canterbury. But please bring some roses and things to-morrow—and if they look dead, then so much the better."

With that she positively hustled Jeremy into the kitchen, and then did not let him again out of sight until he had taken his basket and implements and departed.

## II.

It was long beyond his usual hour when Mr. Canterbury came home from the City; night had fallen to cover Jeremy's handiwork from observation; and Mrs. Canterbury was safe until morning, at all events.

Mr. Canterbury's violent antagonism towards men and things had lessened, but he was evidently still far from being at peace with the world.

He ate his supper in silence, then pushed back his chair, and began to unburden his mind of the weight it carried.

"They are sending me to Germany," he said, briefly. The firm by which he was employed were always referred to by him as "they."

This was not the first time Mr. Canterbury had been ordered abroad. Hitherto Mrs. Canterbury had found his absences a hardship, for he was not always bad-tempered, and the house was lonely without him. Now, however, on hearing the news she felt a desire to attempt the tango.

"You seem pleased about it," said Mr. Canterbury. "I shall be gone at least a month," he warned her.

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This was better and better, and Mrs. Canterbury wanted to throw her arms around his neck and kiss him. By the time he came back from Germany the garden would be wearing again its normal aspect.

"I thought you liked going abroad," she said, innocently. "You enjoyed your American trip."



"'MY DEAR MAN,' SAID MRS. CANTERBURY, 'MY HUSBAND PUT SIX PENNYWORTH OF GRASS-SEED IN THERE THIS SUMMER; YOU MUSTN'T TOUCH THAT.'"

"It's very inconvenient to be away just now. I wanted to tidy up the garden."

She nearly laughed outright at this.

"We shall have to employ a gardener," she said, a little hysterically.

"Gardener! Let me catch one of them about. That's all. It's lucky I saw that fellow this morning. He'd have taken you in, I'll be bound. He is one of the wheedling type. Ah, you may laugh; I know them."

Mrs. Canterbury did not press the point, and finally the subject was driven from her mind by the more important business of packing portmanteaux.

The next morning as Mark drove to the station he again saw Jeremy, who, laden with plants, had paused to rest for a moment beneath a great tree, which stood by the roadside.

"Impudent old humbug," thought Mark. "He has stolen those plants, I'll be bound. I must write and warn Janet again about him. He is just the sort to get round her. He'll be off with those rose-trees of mine if we don't look out."

Jeremy, when he arrived, was puffing beneath the weight of his load. Mrs. Canterbury, hearing his voice, hastened out to him. It was necessary to keep a sharp eye on his doings.

"What ever are you going to do with all these?" she said, pointing to the plants.

"Oh, we'll find room for them," said Jeremy.

"But — but, I said 'Bring one or two,' and you've brought dozens. There are more plants here than Mr. Canterbury ever bought in his life."

"And better," said Jeremy. "I got these from my son up at the Hall. We'll make this something like a garden."

"But——" commenced Mrs. Canterbury.

"Now these," said Jeremy, "are peonies

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—two of them are scented varieties. That's a Birket Foster—and that's a Christobel."

"Peonies!" Mrs. Canterbury loved peonies.

"These are delphiniums—light blue and dark, and one white. You don't get those every day. I've brought a dozen roses. Liberty, Druschki—and some others."

"Roses!" And they looked as though they would grow.

Poor Mrs. Canterbury found herself hedged in by temptation, and began to waver again. She seemed to be at the entrance of a forbidden garden, and Jeremy enticing her in.

"Carnations," went on Jeremy, spreading out the plants on the path. "Pyrethrums—six colours. Aquilegia. Gaillardias. Phlox—three colours." And at the mention of each flower Mrs. Canterbury weakened still more. It was surely foolish not to take advantage of such a golden opportunity.

At last Jeremy finished displaying the treasures he had collected for her. Oh! thought Mrs. Canterbury, if only Mark were there, surely he would share her enthusiasm.

"Of course," said Jeremy, "you still want some annuals; we could make a bed for sweet-peas at the lower end there, and have it ready for the spring planting."

"Sweet-peas!" Mrs. Canterbury's heart ached at the thought of their blossoms. Already she had stepped inside the forbidden gate. Mark was on his way to Germany, and Jeremy was waiting here to wave a magic wand and turn a wilderness into a paradise of flowers.

"Yes," she said, with a thin, outward show of firmness, "it would be very nice indeed; but I must consult Mr. Canterbury first, and he won't be back in London for at least a month."

Jeremy shook his head.

"These plants must go in now or never. My son hasn't any more to spare." Jeremy picked up some of them, and began to appoint a place for each in the borders.

"It would be a pity to take them away again," said Mrs. Canterbury, helplessly.



"I GOT THESE FROM MY SON UP AT THE HALL. WE'LL MAKE THIS SOMETHING LIKE A GARDEN."

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"Leave it all to me," said Jeremy, continuing to distribute the plants. "Your husband will find nothing to complain of."

The impulsive Mrs. Canterbury once more changed her attitude. "What a splendid surprise it would be for Mark," she thought.

"But," said Mrs. Canterbury, wavering again, "but when you have laid out the garden, surely it will need proper attention, and I am afraid Mr. Canterbury would not agree to employ you."

"As for that," said Jeremy, "I don't think I could come regularly, if he asked me to. You must learn to cultivate it for yourselves."

"Could I do it?" said Mrs. Canterbury.

"You have all the look of a gardener," said Jeremy. "I'll be pleased to teach you."

She clapped her hands. Splendid! Talking to Jeremy had the effect of an intoxication upon her. That morning she took her first lessons in gardening; and for many days afterwards her household duties were left to her maid, whilst she worked beside Jeremy, learning to plant, and to hoe, and to dig—an apt and eager pupil.

By the time the day of Mark's return to England drew near the garden had become a haven of happiness to her. The new pursuit had formed a fresh and healthy phase in her life, and brought a sparkle of colour to her pretty cheeks which they had never known before.

Little more remained to be done now until winter should have gone, and Mrs. Canterbury did not enjoy her enforced idleness. She awaited the coming of spring with almost as much impatience as she awaited the home-coming of her deceived and travel-worn husband. What a splendid surprise it would be for him!

## III.

To Janet's disappointment, a thick fog signalled Mark's return from the Continent. She did not want to tell him of all that had been accomplished during his absence. She wished the transformed garden to burst into view, like an unexpected piece of landscape, whilst she stood at his elbow to hear his exclamations of surprise and listen to his praise and congratulations. Instead, she had to spend an afternoon and evening listening dutifully to his sulky dispraise of Germany and the conditions of German life. He had not enjoyed his trip, and appeared bent on inflicting upon his wife most of the discomforts which he imagined he had endured.

He returned on a Friday. The following day the fog lifted, but his bad temper continued.

"Poor darling," thought Janet. "The journey has tried his nerves; he is very highly strung. When he sees the garden it will give him something else to think about."

Mark ate his dinner moodily, still suffering from a sense of injustice, and then, having lit a cigar, pushed back his chair and said he was going to look round the garden.

Janet, her heart beating with suppressed excitement, got up and followed him out.

"I must see about tidying it up a bit," he said, as they passed through the drawing-room.

He opened the doors leisurely and went down the steps, Janet at his heels. He looked questioningly at an arch which crossed the path, walked on quickly under it, and suddenly came to a standstill. He went on a few paces and stopped again. He seemed bewildered for a moment, and then he turned to Janet. With a pang of disappointment she saw now that there was no look of joyous surprise on his face. A black cloud was on his brow, blacker than any she had seen there before.

"Here, what's all this?" he said.

The straight, monotonous beds, full of weeds and ill-nourished plants, had gone; new beds, deep and rich in soil, prospered at points where they were open to the air and sunshine; soot-grimed, straggling shrubs and languishing trees no longer flaunted their ugliness. What remained of the lawn had been levelled, cleaned, and resown, and the young grass was already growing. In the beds, plants were sleeping until the warmth of spring and summer bade them throw out their green stems and blossoms and fragrance. Silver-leaved pinks and herbs stood out behind the new stone bordering to brighten the garden, even at this dark season of the year. And there were nests of bulbs from which snowdrops, daffodils, and tulips were to spring. But it was all lost upon Mark. Disapproval, stern disapproval, was written upon his features.

"Now, what is all this?" he asked again. He had already arrived at his verdict, but he assumed an air of judicial calm. The accused should be given a hearing.

"Don't you like it?" said Janet. She could scarcely speak for disappointment.

"Like it!" said he, throwing off his judicial calm. "Where have all those new tiles gone? What are those crooked beds for? Who has been messing about with the grass? Who



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gave permission for these beds to be made? I really did think you had more decency than to behave like this in my absence. To think that I can't leave home for a few days without all this nonsense going on. I suppose now-



"'HERE, WHAT'S ALL THIS?' HE SAID."

adays it is not necessary to consult me on anything. Pull the house down and rebuild it. Don't trouble to ask my permission. Don't tell me. Wait until I've gone abroad, and then—do it."

He stamped his way on to the lawn, trampling down the young grass.

"Please, Mark, don't spoil it all, now it is done. I'm sorry if you don't like it."

"Who did it?" demanded Mark, from the centre of the lawn.

"I thought you would be pleased," said Janet, a hard look coming into her features.

"Who did it? That's what I want to know."

"Perhaps I did it," said Janet. "I'm a better gardener than you think for."

"Do you seriously want me to believe that you did all this? Rubbish! It's more than I could do myself," he said.

Janet, her cheeks burning, her heart aching, and with tears forcing themselves into her eyes, could not reply.

Suddenly inspired, Mark came on to the path and faced her.

"What about that humbugging gardener fellow that I turned away? Has he been here again?"

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Janet started to run indoors, that she might cry her eyes out in secret. But Mark was pitiless. He caught her by the arm.

"Answer me! Did you, or did you not, have that fellow in here?"

"Yes."

"In spite of my warnings, in spite of my telling you not to!"

"You were wrong. He is a clever gardener, and honest; this proves it." Janet's disappointment was changing to bitterness. She felt that Mark's behaviour made him ridiculous, contemptible.

As for him, he felt an insane desire to punish her. He could not stand this sort of thing. He must be master in his own house. But, short of beating her, he could devise no punishment. He sighed as though he were sorely tried, but magnanimously wished to be patient.

"At the rate those chaps work it must have taken him a goodish time. A pretty penny he's made out of us, I'll be bound." He flared again. "And I've got to pay, and I've also got to clear the wretched mess up." He looked about the beds. "What are all these things stuck about? Rubbish he has sold you for plants, I suppose. It'll all have to come out, and be burnt," he went on; and then he noticed that Janet was looking at him horrified. He took off his coat and turned up his sleeves.

"Where's a spade?" he said. "I may as well make a start."

Janet caught at his arm.

"You are not going to spoil my garden, Mark!"

"No," he said, "I'm going to try and make it a bit decent."

"Mark, you shall not touch it!" she cried, indignantly.

He laughed sourly, and continued to look for the spade. Here then was the punishment it was fitting to inflict. He would not be crossed; he would be master in his own house. The garden was a foolish fad of hers. She must learn to obey. Perhaps she should have another garden later on, in the spring. He would see what he could do. But this—this must go.

He found the spade, and lifted it violently to attack the nearest flower-bed.

Then a heavy drop of rain fell. In the darkness which had clouded their hearts neither husband nor wife had seen the lowering skies; but in a few moments there came a deluge which drove the unhappy pair indoors and postponed the destruction of Janet's cherished garden.

IV.

ALTHOUGH Mark did not abandon his ugly intentions, business appointments and the elements continually conspired to protect the garden from his unkind hand. If the day were fine it would happen that he was away from home; when he did secure a few leisure hours, fog or a downpour of rain would keep him indoors, a fidgety prisoner, or drive him irritably to his club.

Janet watched the garden jealously, tending it skilfully, whenever possible; but as the shadow on her home-life deepened she began to wish she had never seen Jeremy Hobbs.

Rain was succeeded by frost, and winter in turn covered the unlucky garden with a protective mantle of snow.

All through the winter Mark grumbled and threatened. If Janet sought to placate him, he snapped at her, thinking she was scheming to save her garden from its impending destruction. If she were silent, he called it sulking. If she visited her friends, he complained that she was never at home. In short he had convinced himself that he was a very badly-treated man, and that things could never be the same again between them until what he considered "the wrong" had been "righted" to his satisfaction.

With the passing of winter, tender spikes and shoots of green began to push their way above the ground, but with Mark stern-browed whenever the garden was mentioned, Janet found it impossible to take interest in the work which she had once believed meant so much to her.

A few weeks later Mark at last was given an opportunity of carrying out his plan of destruction.

From the window she watched him examining the garden.

"I would help him destroy it," she thought, "if he would only make friends."

Mark, however, did not carry out his foolish plan. The day was full of the promise of spring, and, after speculating upon the tedious labour his purpose involved, he promised himself a walk on the common instead. He did not feel that he could bother about the garden on such a day. Whistling a cheerful air, he returned indoors.

As he passed through the kitchen he found Janet looking wonderfully pretty in her big apron, busy cooking. She harmonized with the delicate beauty of the springtime.

Suddenly his heart filled with remorse.

He hadn't given her much of a time lately, he thought. He had half a mind to kiss

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"JEREMY, VIOLENTLY DRUNK, WAS WRECKING THE GARDEN, WHILST MRS. CANTERBURY HEROICALLY BUT VAINLY ENDEAVOURED TO SUBDUE HIM."

her ; instead he patted her encouragingly on the shoulder, and went off for his walk.

When he returned he had forgotten the episode. But Janet was now more than ever bent on reconciliation, and was eager to find some means of atonement, some practical way of showing she was sorry for what had occurred. "Bother the old garden!" she kept saying to herself.

For several days she could find no satisfactory answer to her problem, and then one afternoon Jeremy knocked at the area door.

He presented a very different appearance from that which he had borne in the autumn. His confident, clean, masterful air had deserted him. He was an object of interest no longer, but one of pity.

The maid called Janet down to him.

"Is there anything I can do in the garden to-day?" he almost begged.

"Why, you've been ill," said she. "Come in and sit down."

Jeremy for the first time since she had known him looked confused.

"It's been a trying winter," he said.

Janet saw he did not want to be questioned. And she also saw that he needed work. Not many would employ him in this miserable condition. She herself could not of course engage him again. Then suddenly she found her problem answered. She hesitated a moment, and then told Jeremy to follow her into the garden.

Jeremy went with her, but soon found he was not to be left to his own devices.

He looked at her in amazement when she gave him his instructions. Some of his old spirit revived in him and he began to expostulate with her, but he was no match for her now. And, finally, he capitulated.

"The plants have done very well," he said.

She nodded her head, and then hurried indoors.

Jeremy commenced upon his appointed task. After working diligently for a space he suddenly threw down his spade and, saying nothing to Mrs. Canterbury, left the garden, retraced his steps half-guiltily through the kitchen, and hurried away from the house and down the street.

Had Mrs. Canterbury seen him upon his return, an hour later, he would not have

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regained admission; but the maid let him in unsuspectingly.

Then commenced a reign of havoc, accompanied by the sounds of shouting and cursing.

The noise of the tumult reached Mrs. Canterbury, who ran downstairs in alarm. As she went out to Jeremy, Mr. Canterbury, who had left the City early, let himself in at the front door. He also heard the sounds of riot, and, scenting battle, followed his wife.

Jeremy, violently drunk, was wrecking the garden, whilst Mrs. Canterbury heroically but vainly endeavoured to subdue him.

Mr. Canterbury rushed at Jeremy and, without a word, collared him, pushed him roughly out of the garden, through the house, and deposited him in the street beyond. Then, satisfied so far, he returned to deal with his wife.

"You had better come in," he said, sternly. "We'll talk this over indoors."

"Mark, dear," she said, "let me explain."

"Explain!" he said. "How can you explain such ingratitude?"

"Mark, go and look after him. Perhaps you've killed him. It's my fault. I told him to do it."

"You told him to get beastly drunk!"

"No. But I told him—to change the garden back again to what it was before we altered it. It wasn't fair of me. He loves gardens. It must have—upset him."

"You told him to pull the garden to bits!" said Mark, incredulously, "when you thought such a lot of it!"

"I didn't want it, if it displeased you," she said, softly.

Mark felt humbled, ashamed. Janet had meant to sacrifice her garden for his sake, and he had misunderstood.

"Janet!"

"Go and look after Jeremy," she said. And, his obstinate temper subdued at last, he went out in search of the man he had abused.

Jeremy had picked himself up and was staggering down the road. Mark hastened after him and, overtaking him, caught him by the arm.

Jeremy looked at him vacantly.

"D'you know who I amsh?" he hiccupped. "I'm finest gardener in the town. I'm finest gardener in England. I'm finest gardener in all the world. Prizes, me boy! Prizish!"

Mark was tempted to leave him, but he knew that Janet would wish him to protect the foolish old man, and he looked about for a cab. He wanted to make amends to Janet, if not to Jeremy.

At that moment a policeman came up. He laughed when he saw the gardener.

"Halloa Jeremy, you in trouble again?"

"I tell you," said Jeremy, "I'm finest gardener in the world!"

"Do you know where he lives?" said Mark.

The policeman did know, and between them they lifted him into a cab and had him conveyed home.

"A sad case, sir," said the policeman. "What he says is quite true. He has earned a thousand a year in his time. He was the Duke of ——'s head gardener. Family trouble upset him and he took to drink. The Duke stood him for a long time, but of course, when Jeremy began to dance in the flower-beds and smash the conservatories, he had to go. Give him a garden to lay out, and he'll often keep sober. But when the work is finished he generally breaks out. A very sad case, sir."

Mr. Canterbury nodded, and thoughtfully returned home. He did not tell his wife what he had learned, but he went out into the garden to sum up the extent of the mischief. It did not seem irretrievable.

At supper he began to talk to Janet about it.

"I can't help thinking," he said, as he stirred his coffee, "that it was a pity to disturb the garden; the plants are beginning to grow. Don't you think we might put it to rights again?"

"Mark," said Janet, "I'm sure we could."

"Well, then," he said, "we must see what we can do. And I think we'll have Jeremy in sometimes—when he's sober. Perhaps I was wrong about him."

The Canterburys' garden is now a wonder to behold. The knowledge which Mrs. Canterbury gained from Jeremy she passed on to her husband, and the pair are often to be seen working peacefully together in their miniature paradise. Gardening under such conditions seems to have benefited Mr. Canterbury's nerves; he is certainly quieter in temper. His wife is as happy as the day is long.

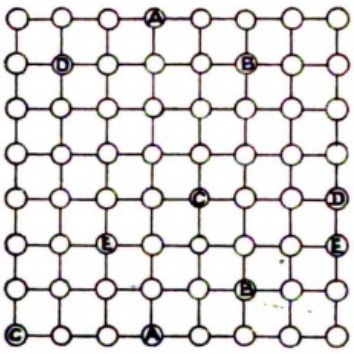
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# PERPLEXITIES.

## By HENRY E. DUDENEY.

### 215.—THE FIVE REGIMENTS.

THE illustration represents a map (considerably simplified for our purpose) of a certain district on the Continent. The circles are towns and the lines roads. During the war five regiments marched to new positions on the same night. The body stationed at the upper A marched to the lower A, that at the upper B to the lower B, that at the upper C to the lower C, that at the upper D to the lower D, and the regiment at the left-hand E marched to the right-hand E. Yet no regiment ever saw anything of any other regiment. Can you mark out the route taken by each so that no two regiments ever go along the same road anywhere?

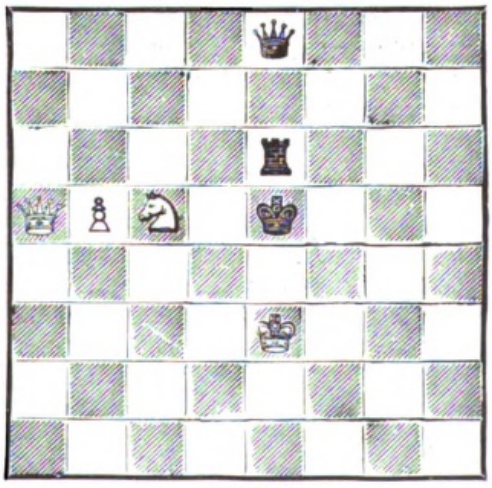



### 216.—THE BASKET OF POTATOES.

A MAN had a basket containing fifty potatoes. He proposed to his son, as a little recreation, that he should place these potatoes on the ground in a straight line. The distance between the first and second potatoes was to be one yard, between the second and third three yards, between the third and fourth five yards, and so on—an increase of two yards for every successive potato. Then the boy was to pick them up and put them in the basket one at a time, the basket being placed beside the first potato. How far would the boy have to travel to accomplish the feat of picking them all up? We will not consider the journey involved in placing the potatoes; he starts with them all laid out.

### 217.—A CHESS PUZZLE.

BLACK.



WHITE.

THIS is an entertaining little chess puzzle by the late Mr. E. N. Frankenstein. White has to retract his last move, and then mate in one move. You see, he had a mate on the move and overlooked it, making an inferior move. So you must discover what that inferior move was, retract it, and play the correct one.

### 218.—CONCERNING A CHEQUE.

A MAN went into a bank to cash a cheque. In handing over the money the cashier, by mistake, gave him pounds for shillings and shillings for pounds. He pocketed the money without examining it, and spent half a crown on his way home, when he found that he possessed exactly twice the amount of the cheque. He had no money in his pocket before going to the bank, and it is an interesting puzzle to find out what was the exact amount of that cheque.

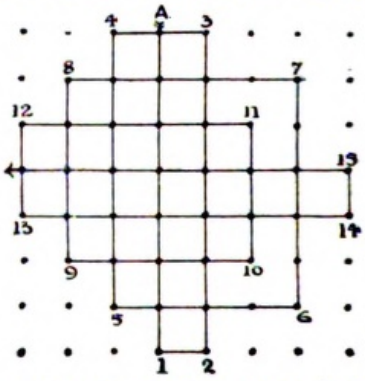
### 219.—THRICE BEHEADED.

UNTOUCHED I tell of budding growth and life;
Beheaded I lead upward, more or less;
Again—with varied fragrance I am rife;
Again—but little value I express.

## Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles.

### 210.—A MOTOR-CAR PUZZLE.

IT will be seen from the illustration (where the roads not used are omitted) that the traveller can go as far as seventy miles in fifteen turnings. The turnings are all numbered in the order in which they are taken. He never visits nineteen of the towns. He might visit them all in fifteen turnings, never entering any town twice, and end at A, from which he starts, but such a tour would only take him sixty-four miles.




### 211.—THE SMUGGLERS' WINE.

THERE must have been three smugglers in order that there should be an equitable division. Two men would each receive two quarts and three pints of wine, and two quarts and one pint in empty bottles. The third man would receive three quarts and one pint of wine, and one quart and three pints in empty bottles. Each would then have the same quantity of wine and the same number of bottles of both kinds.

### 212.—THE EIGHTEEN COUNTERS.

THE total value of all the counters is 213 shillings; therefore each man must receive 71 shillings. Give one man counters for 50, 10, 5, 3, 2, and 1 shillings. Give another man 25, 20, 20, 3, 2, and 1 shillings; and give the last man 25, 20, 10, 10, 5, and 1 shillings.

### 213.—CATCHING THE THIEF.

THE constable took thirty steps. In the same time the thief would take forty-eight, which, added to his start of twenty-seven, carried him seventy-five steps. This distance would be exactly equal to the thirty steps of the constable.

### 214.—MISSING WORDS.

SPRITE, STRIPE, RIPEST, and PRIEST.

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# THE TWELVE MONTHS.

A STORY FOR CHILDREN.

Translated from the French by E. DYKE.

Illustrated by H. R. Millar.



ONCE upon a time there was a widow with whom lived two girls. One of these, Helen, was her own daughter; the other, Mariette, was her step-daughter, the child of her husband and his first wife. The woman adored Helen, but hated Mariette, because she was so much more beautiful than her half-sister. The poor child, who did not know how pretty she was, could not understand why the mere sight of her seemed to put her stepmother into a passion. She was set to do all the work of the house. She it was who prepared the meals, washed the dishes and the clothes, sewed and spun, while lazy Helen spent her whole time in dressing herself up and lolling about at her ease.

Mariette took all this rough treatment—even the blows often rained upon her by the cruel woman and her daughter—very meekly and patiently, but her gentleness did not soften her stepmother's hard heart.

One day, in January, Helen had a sudden whim.

"Go into the woods," she said to her sister, "and gather a bunch of violets for me to fasten into my belt."

"My dear sister!" said Mariette. "What

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has put such an idea into your head? You know quite well that no violets are to be found under the snow!"

"Stupid girl!" stormed Helen. "Do you dare to 'answer back' when I give you an order? Be off this instant! And if you return without the violets, you shall be treated to a good beating!"

Then Mariette's stepmother took her by the shoulders, pushed her out into the street, and shut the door upon her.

Crying bitterly, the girl went to the woods, where for a long time she wandered about, tormented by hunger and perished with cold. She even prayed that she might die, and so be released from her misery.

All at once she saw, high up in the distance, a flickering light. Going towards it, she reached the top of a mountain, where a great fire was burning. Around the fire stood twelve blocks of stone, and on each block sat a man. Three of the men were very young and beautiful; the three who sat next to them were not quite so young; the three next were old; and the hair and beards of the remaining three were perfectly white. All were silently gazing into the fire.

These twelve men were the Twelve Months of the year. Old January, who had a very venerable appearance, presided over the assembly, holding a sceptre in his hand.

At sight of these silent figures Mariette, full of fear, stood still. Her voice trembled as she murmured:—

"Of your pity, good sirs, let me warm myself at your fire. I am frozen!"

Dignified old January bowed his head, which was his way of saying "Yes."

"What brings you here, my child?" he asked.

"I have come to look for violets."

"But this is not the right time of year for them. Don't you know that they are never to be found under the snow?"

"I know it; and yet if I do not find any my mother and sister will beat me terribly. Oh, please do—*do* tell me where I may find some!"

Old January rose from his seat and handed his sceptre to the youngest of the twelve men.

"Up, March!" he said. "Take my place."

March obeyed. Seating himself on the highest stone, he held out his sceptre over the fire. In a moment the flames leaped up, the snow began to melt, the trees to bud, and the grass to grow. And there, under the bushes, were the sweet little violets!

"Make haste to gather them, my dear!" said March, and Mariette gathered a beautiful bunch.

Then, after thanking the twelve men, she went home. Scarcely had she quitted the spot when January, taking back his sceptre, caused the flames to sink down. Again snow covered the mountain, and a bleak wind whistled beneath the darkening sky.

The stepmother was very much astonished to see Mariette returning with the violets. She called Helen, who, by way of thanks, said only:—

"Where did you get them?"

"On the top of the mountain," replied the other girl, "where I saw a great many."

The next day Helen, sitting comfortably by the fireside, said that she longed for strawberries, and ordered her sister to fetch some. As before, the widow turned Mariette out of doors, threatening her with dire punishment if she did not immediately obey. The girl went as quickly as possible to the mountain-top, where she saw again the twelve men sitting in silence around their fire.

"What, here again, little one?" said old January, kindly. "And what do you want now?"

"Strawberries. If I go home without them I shall be dreadfully beaten."

January rose, went to the man whose seat faced his own, and gave the sceptre into his hands.

"Up, June!" he said. "Take my place."

June seated himself on the tallest stone. When he held the sceptre over the fire the flames leaped up even higher than when March had ruled them. The snow vanished in a moment; trees in full foliage adorned the green fields; flowers of all kinds studded the grass; and on every side was heard the sweet singing of birds. It was summer.

At the foot of a tree some fine strawberries were ripening in the sunshine. Mariette joyfully filled her basket (which her stepmother had thrust into her hands when she turned her out), and, after thanking her kind friends, went home. As before, January immediately resumed his sceptre and his seat, and sent the icy wind careering over the country.

The widow and her daughter could scarcely believe their eyes when Mariette brought in the strawberries. They ate all of them, without giving her one.

On the following day Helen told her sister to go and fetch some apples from the woods.

"But I should not find them in mid-winter," said the girl. "It is impossible."

"Impossible, is it?" sneered Helen. "We

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"'WHAT, HERE AGAIN, LITTLE ONE?' SAID OLD JANUARY, KINDLY. 'AND WHAT DO YOU WANT NOW?'"

shall see about that! If you return with empty hands we will beat you to death!"

Terrified, Mariette fled to the mountain-top. The twelve men saw her when she was still at some distance from them.

"Yet again, my poor child?" cried January. "How is this?"

"Oh, sir!" sobbed Mariette. "My sister and stepmother will kill me unless I can find some apples."

"Up, September, and take my place!" said good January.

September seated himself on the tallest stone and held the sceptre over the fire. The flames jumped up a little higher, the snow began to melt; but the trees, though they had a few leaves, were losing them one by one as they fell and strewed the ground. In the midst of a meadow stood a grand apple-tree, laden with fruit. Mariette ran to it joyously and shook it. A beautiful, rosy apple fell at her feet; she picked it up eagerly, and again shook the tree. A second apple fell. As she stooped to take it September called out to her:—

"Make haste to return, my child! It is late, and you might lose your way."

Mariette thanked him prettily, then ran back to the house as quickly as her feet could carry her.

The stepmother and sister were astonished. Those two fine apples made their mouths water! Helen snatched one from her sister.

"Where did you get them?" she asked, in a rough tone.

"Up yonder, on the mountain, where there are a great many," replied Mariette.

"Then why did you not bring me more? You have eaten the others by the way, you



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greedy creature!" And the wicked girl gave her sister two resounding slaps.

Mariette, crying, took refuge in the kitchen, while the others enjoyed the apples.

"*I* shall go to the mountain to-day," said Helen, the next morning. "It will amuse me to gather the apples, and I will bring back a lot."

Her mother tried in vain to dissuade her; the obstinate, spoiled child would have her own way. She put on a fur cloak, drew the hood over her head, and set off for the mountain. The snow was so deep that no trace of a path could be seen. Helen lost herself, but after wandering about for a long time she saw at length a light and went towards it.

This light, of course, came from the fire around which sat the Twelve Months. Helen, rather fearful at first, soon recovered herself, and, without troubling to ask permission, calmly walked up to the fire and began to warm her hands.

"What are you doing here?" inquired January.

"What is that to you, old idiot?" said rude Helen. "Mind your own business!"

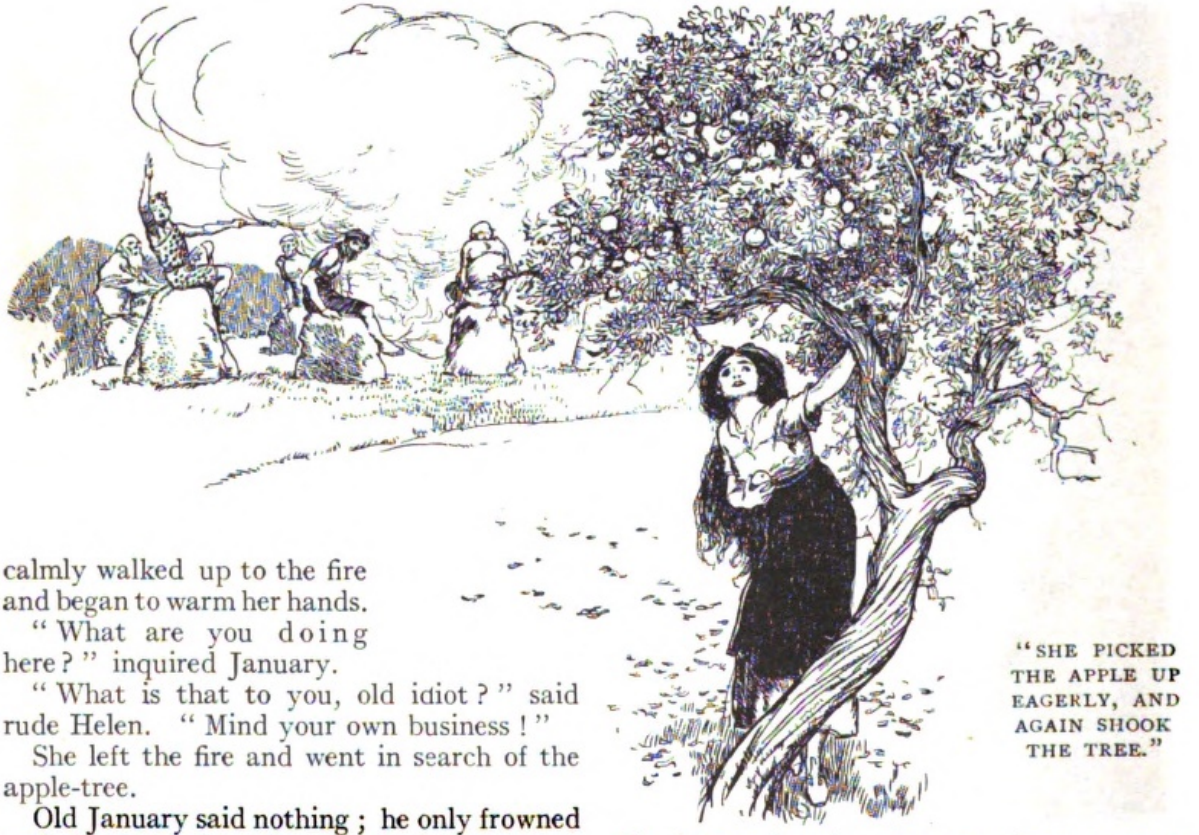
She left the fire and went in search of the apple-tree.

Old January said nothing; he only frowned and shook his long beard. And as soon as he did that the sky grew darker. Lower and lower sank the fire; the flames died down, leaving only a few red coals. The snow began to fall in huge flakes, and an icy, howling blast swept across the mountain.

Helen, in the darkness, and blinded by the snow, again lost her way. She wandered miserably to and fro, until, overcome by fatigue, she sank on the ground. Then, in spite of her fur cloak, her limbs were soon benumbed, and during that cold night she was frozen to death.

Her mother, finding that she did not return, became terribly anxious. Thinking that Helen might be lingering to eat the apples, she put on her outdoor garments and went in search of her. When the woman came near to the mountain she called loudly. There was no reply. She then attempted to climb the hill, but the wind and snow were too much for her, and in a few moments she fainted and fell. Thus she, too, was killed by the cold.

Mariette, left alone in the house, made ready a meal, put everything in order, and then sat down to her spinning-wheel. When night came, and the widow and her daughter were still absent, good little Mariette felt very anxious, and remained all night at the window, hoping every moment to see them return. The next day some wood-cutters came to the house, bearing the two frozen corpses which they had found in the woods. The tender-hearted girl wept when she thought of the sad end of these two who had caused her so much suffering.



"SHE PICKED THE APPLE UP EAGERLY, AND AGAIN SHOOK THE TREE."

She was now sole mistress of the house, and there she lived until, by and by, her good sense and beauty won for her the heart and hand of a good man, who made her life a very happy one.

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# "As Funny as They Can."

III.

## By CHARLES PEARS.

The following series is founded upon an entirely new idea — a different well-known humorous artist assuming the post of editor every month and doing his best to make his particular instalment "as funny as he can."

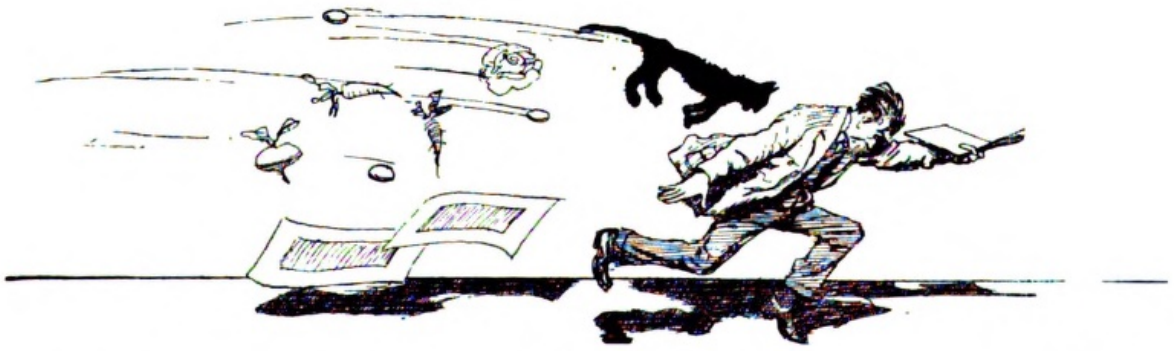
It will be interesting to hear from our readers at the end of a few months which editor they consider has been most successful in making them laugh.



MR. CHARLES PEARS.
*Photo. by Russell & Sons.*

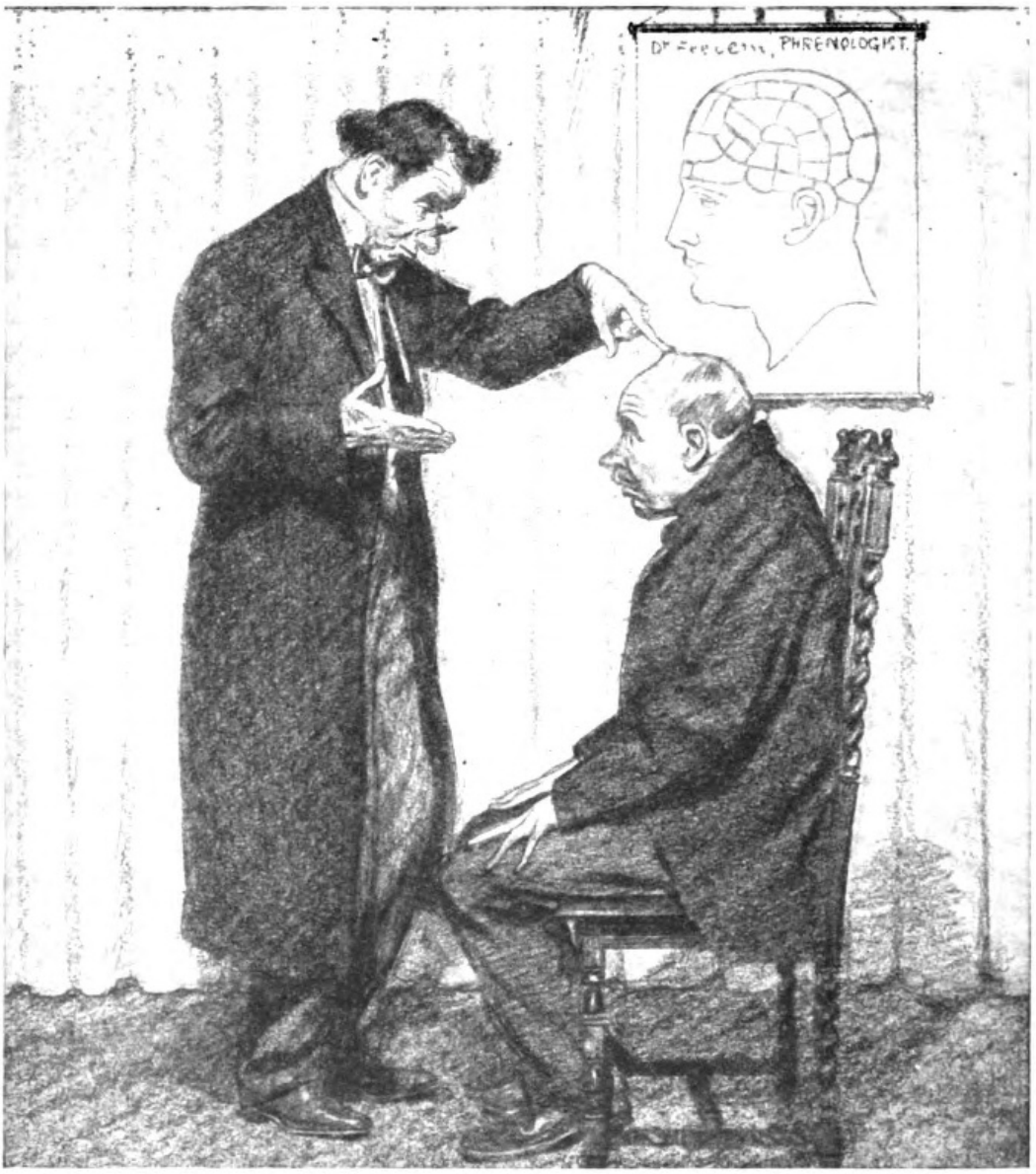


The Editor of "The Strand Magazine" is an optimist, for he has asked me to supply five pages of what I consider to be humorous matter. Well, here is my five-page effort.

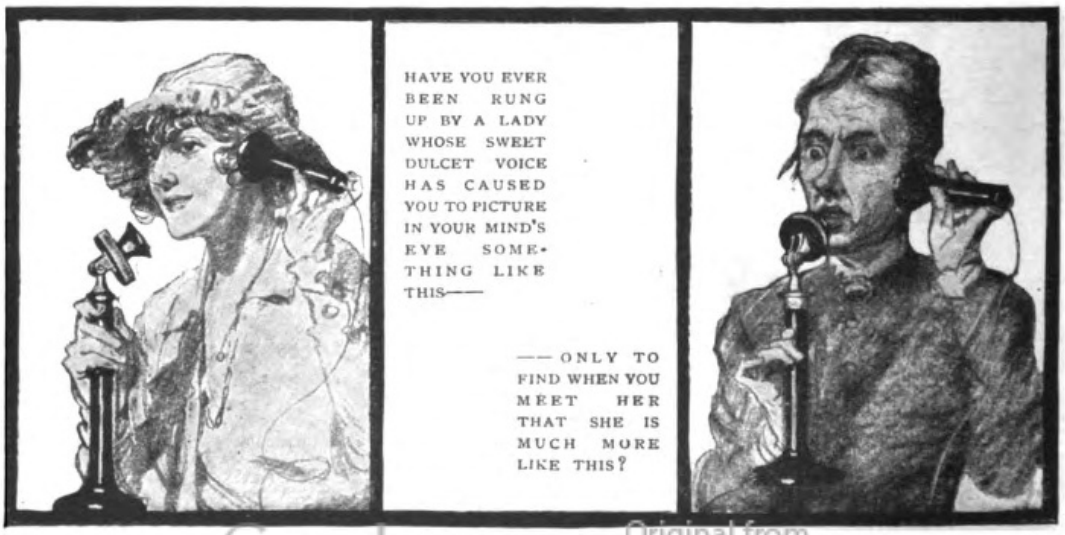


I don't know whether or not it *is* funny, and you will also probably have your doubts about it, too.

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PHRENOLOGIST: "YOU ARE MARRIED AND YOU HAVE A VERY LARGE AND POWERFUL WIFE."




A TELEPHONE TRAGEDY.

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# THE BEDS IN PEW 69.



"THE LAST TRAIN HAD GONE."

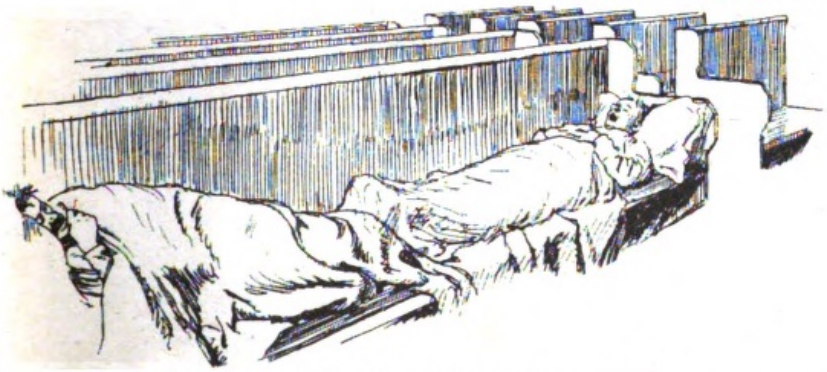
TWO travellers arriving late one night in an out-of-the-way Scotch village made the alarming discovery that the last train had gone. They thereupon betook themselves to the one and only Hostel in the place, and were there informed that all the beds were occupied.

The landlord of the Inn, however, was also the caretaker of the village church, and so, promptly fetching the key, he conducted the two travellers to the kirk and made them up a bed in one of the pews. Whereupon the travellers settled down for the night.

Some time after midnight the landlord was aroused from his sleep by cries of "Fire!" and looking out of his bedroom window he saw the local fire-engine being trundled towards the kirk from whence came the tootling of the fire-bell.



"HE CONDUCTED THE TWO TRAVELLERS TO THE KIRK."



"THEY SETTLED DOWN FOR THE NIGHT."

Hastily springing out of bed and arousing the house, the landlord sent his man post-haste to the kirk to find out where the fire was. After a somewhat lengthy absence he returned, and upon the landlord impatiently demanding, "Well, where's the fire?" the man replied: "There's na a fire, but I've gotten an order for twa big whiskies and sodas fro' pew saxty-nine!"



"THE LOCAL FIRE-ENGINE WAS BEING TRUNDLED TOWARDS THE KIRK."



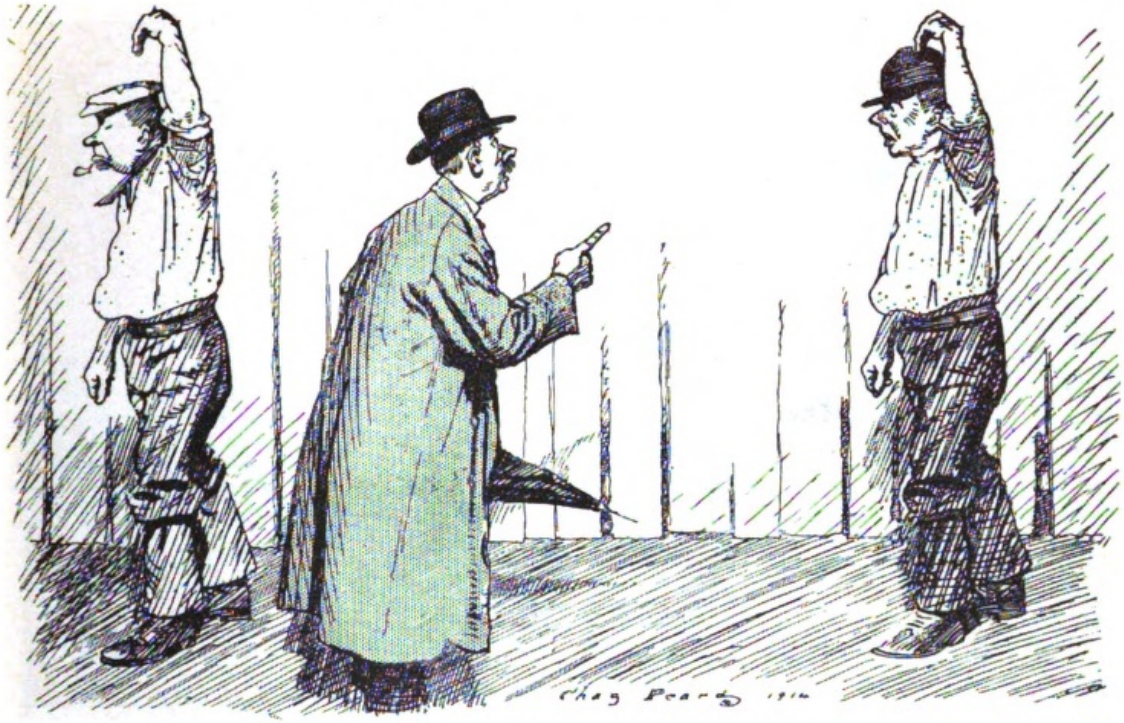
"WELL, WHERE'S THE FIRE?"

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NURSE. "I WONDER WHAT THAT BABY O' MINE'S

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PASSER-BY: "Excuse me, but would you mind telling me why you two men are carrying your hands like that?"
SECOND WORKMAN (to his mate): "Hi! Bill, there's a bloke 'ere just reminded me we ain't got the ladder."



'OWLING ABOUT?"



PRINTER: "Here, this pram oughtn't to be on this page!"
EDITOR: "No, but that's the wretched artist's idea of being funny."
PRINTER: "Also, 'e's drawn *it* in chalk and *us* in pen and ink! What's 'e done that for?"
EDITOR: "Oh, he'd do anything—or *anybody*."

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# CURIOSITIES.

[*We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.*]

## A CLEVER ILLUSION.

THIS photograph, taken by me in Brazil, shows a new pavement made with little pieces of granite, of two shades, placed in such a pattern as to make it appear as if it were raised in the middle, but in reality it is perfectly flat. It only needs looking at steadily in order to see that this is so. — Mr. G. E. Rule, Gonville House, Eastbourne College.



## BIRD'S NEST FIFTEEN FEET IN DIAMETER AND AS HIGH AS A MAN'S HIP.

THIS statement may be verified by comparing the size of the rifle



(an ordinary Winchester repeater) in the photograph with the nest on which it is lying. The builder of this great pile is the Australian mallee hen, a bird considerably smaller than a domestic turkey. The nest is used year after year, and as many as twenty or thirty pairs of birds use the same nest at the one time. It is not uncommon to find a hundred eggs in a nest, and these are very good for cooking purposes. A large mound of earth is scratched together by the birds, the centre being filled with leaves, and on these the eggs are laid. They are then covered with more leaves and earth, and the cares of the parent birds are ended. They do not sit on the eggs at all as the spontaneous combustion of the rotting leaves generates the required heat for incubation. The chickens are able to run about and find food for themselves from the time they are hatched. The mallee hen is a very shy bird, and is seldom seen near any habitation. The above photograph was taken near Kellerberrin, in Western Australia. — Mr. Pendrett C. Blacket, 69, Torrington Square, London, W.C.

## WHAT ARE THE WORDS?

HERE is a little puzzle which may amuse your golfing readers :—

"Off to the links!" is now the cry,
For golf is man's . . . . . .
Nor . . . . . be, nor slow;
. . . . . hit, the ball will go!

The three blanks are to be filled with a word of eight letters, and each word is to contain the same letters. The solution will be given next month. — Mr. C. R. Lear, Thanet House, Temple Bar, London, W.C.

## Solution of Last Month's Bridge Problem.

| A | Y | B | Z |
|---|---|---|---|
| Clubs 8 | Clubs queen | Diamonds 4 | Clubs 2 |
| Diamonds 10 | Diamonds 9 | Diamonds 6 | Diamonds 2 |
| Clubs knave | Clubs 3 | Diamonds qn. | Hearts 8 |
| Hearts 2 | Hearts 5 | Hearts knave | Hearts 9 |
| Hearts 3 | Clubs 4 | Hearts 4 | Hearts queen |
| Hearts 7 | Clubs 5 | Hearts ace | Hearts king |
| Diamonds 3 | Clubs 6 | Hearts 6 | Spades 4 |
| Spades 2 | Spades 8 | Spades ace | Spades 6 |
| Clubs 10 | Spades 9 | Spades king | Spades 7 |
| Clubs ace | Clubs 7 | Hearts 10 | Spades queen |
| Diamonds 8 | Clubs 9 | Spades 3 | Diamonds 5 |
| Diamonds king | Clubs king | Spades 5 | Diamonds 7 |
| Diamonds ace | Spades 10 | Spades knave | Diamonds kve. |

The winning card in each trick is underlined.

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"HE PLACED THE SLIPPER UPON THE BLOOD-MARK ON THE SILL."

(See page 490)

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THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

NOVEMBER, 1914.
Vol. xlviii. No. 287.

# The VALLEY of FEAR

# A NEW SHERLOCK HOLMES STORY

By

# A. CONAN DOYLE

*Illustrated by* FRANK WILES

PART I.

## THE TRAGEDY OF BIRLSTONE

The opening chapters of this new and thrilling adventure of Sherlock Holmes described the receipt by Holmes of a cipher message, from which he deduces that some devilry is intended against a man named Douglas, a rich country gentleman living at the Manor House, Birlstone, in Sussex, and that the danger is a pressing one. Almost as soon as he has deciphered the message he is visited by Inspector MacDonald, of Scotland Yard, who brings the news that Mr. Douglas has been murdered that morning. He asks Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson to accompany him to Birlstone, where they are met by Mr. White Mason, the chief Sussex detective, from whom they learn the details of the crime. The murdered man had been horribly injured, while lying across his chest was a curious weapon—a shot-gun with the barrel sawn off a foot in front of the triggers. Near him was found a card with the initials "V V." and the number "341" scrawled on it in ink, and about half-way up the forearm was a curious design—a branded triangle inside a circle. All four then proceed to the Manor House, and, when the present instalment opens, are examining the room in which the crime occurred, accompanied by Mr. Cecil Barker, a friend of the Douglases, who has been staying with them.

### CHAPTER V.

#### THE PEOPLE OF THE DRAMA.

"HAVE you seen all you want of the study?" asked White Mason as we re-entered the house.

"For the time," said the inspector, and Holmes nodded.

"Then perhaps you would now like to hear the evidence of some of the people in the house? We could use the dining-room, Ames. Please come yourself first and tell us what you know."

The butler's account was a simple and a clear one, and he gave a convincing impression of sincerity. He had been engaged five years ago when Mr. Douglas first came to



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Birlstone. He understood that Mr. Douglas was a rich gentleman who had made his money in America. He had been a kind and considerate employer—not quite what Ames was used to, perhaps, but one can't have everything. He never saw any signs of apprehension in Mr. Douglas—on the contrary, he was the most fearless man he had ever known. He ordered the drawbridge to be pulled up every night because it was the ancient custom of the old house, and he liked to keep the old ways up. Mr. Douglas seldom went to London or left the village, but on the day before the crime he had been shopping at Tunbridge Wells. He, Ames, had observed some restlessness and excitement on the part of Mr. Douglas upon that day, for he had seemed impatient and irritable, which was unusual with him. He had not gone to bed that night, but was in the pantry at the back of the house, putting away the silver, when he heard the bell ring violently. He heard no shot, but it was hardly possible he should, as the pantry and kitchens were at the very back of the house and there were several closed doors and a long passage between. The housekeeper had come out of her room, attracted by the violent ringing of the bell. They had gone to the front of the house together. As they reached the bottom of the stair he had seen Mrs. Douglas coming down it. No, she was not hurrying—it did not seem to him that she was particularly agitated. Just as she reached the bottom of the stair Mr. Barker had rushed out of the study. He had stopped Mrs. Douglas and begged her to go back.

"For God's sake, go back to your room!" he cried. "Poor Jack is dead. You can do nothing. For God's sake, go back!"

After some persuasion upon the stairs Mrs. Douglas had gone back. She did not scream. She made no outcry whatever. Mrs. Allen, the housekeeper, had taken her upstairs and stayed with her in the bedroom. Ames and Mr. Barker had then returned to the study, where they had found everything exactly as the police had seen it. The candle was not lit at that time, but the lamp was burning. They had looked out of the window, but the night was very dark and nothing could be seen or heard. They had then rushed out into the hall, where Ames had turned the windlass which lowered the drawbridge. Mr. Barker had then hurried off to get the police.

Such, in its essentials, was the evidence of the butler.

The account of Mrs. Allen, the housekeeper, was, so far as it went, a corroboration of that of her fellow-servant. The housekeeper's room was rather nearer to the front of the house than the pantry in which Ames had been working. She was preparing to go to bed when the loud ringing of the bell had attracted her attention. She was a little hard of hearing. Perhaps that was why she had not heard the sound of the shot, but in any case the study was a long way off. She remembered hearing some sound which she imagined to be the slamming of a door. That was a good deal earlier—half an hour at least before the ringing of the bell. When Mr. Ames ran to the front she went with him. She saw Mr. Barker, very pale and excited, come out of the study. He intercepted Mrs. Douglas, who was coming down the stairs. He entreated her to go back, and she answered him, but what she said could not be heard.

"Take her up. Stay with her!" he had said to Mrs. Allen.

She had therefore taken her to the bedroom and endeavoured to soothe her. She was greatly excited, trembling all over, but made no other attempt to go downstairs. She just sat in her dressing-gown by her bedroom fire with her head sunk in her hands. Mrs. Allen stayed with her most of the night. As to the other servants, they had all gone to bed, and the alarm did not reach them until just before the police arrived. They slept at the extreme back of the house, and could not possibly have heard anything.

So far the housekeeper—who could add nothing on cross-examination save lamentations and expressions of amazement.

Mr. Cecil Barker succeeded Mrs. Allen as a witness. As to the occurrences of the night before, he had very little to add to what he had already told the police. Personally, he was convinced that the murderer had escaped by the window. The blood-stain was conclusive, in his opinion, upon that point. Besides, as the bridge was up there was no other possible way of escaping. He could not explain what had become of the assassin, or why he had not taken his bicycle, if it were indeed his. He could not possibly have been drowned in the moat, which was at no place more than three feet deep.

In his own mind he had a very definite theory about the murder. Douglas was a reticent man, and there were some chapters in his life of which he never spoke. He had emigrated to America from Ireland when he was a very young man. He had prospered well, and Barker had first met him in California, where they had become partners in a successful mining claim at a place called

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"'FOR GOD'S SAKE, GO BACK TO YOUR ROOM!' HE CRIED."

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Benito Canyon. They had done very well, but Douglas had suddenly sold out and started for England. He was a widower at that time. Barker had afterwards realized his money and come to live in London. Thus they had renewed their friendship. Douglas had given him the impression that some danger was hanging over his head, and he had always looked upon his sudden departure from California, and also his renting a house in so quiet a place in England, as being connected with this peril. He imagined that some secret society, some implacable organization, was on Douglas's track which would never rest until it killed him. Some remarks of his had given him this idea, though he had never told him what the society was, nor how he had come to offend it. He could only suppose that the legend upon the placard had some reference to this secret society.

"How long were you with Douglas in California?" asked Inspector MacDonald.

"Five years altogether."

"He was a bachelor, you say?"

"A widower."

"Have you ever heard where his first wife came from?"

"No; I remember his saying that she was of Swedish extraction, and I have seen her portrait. She was a very beautiful woman. She died of typhoid the year before I met him."

"You don't associate his past with any particular part of America?"

"I have heard him talk of Chicago. He knew that city well and had worked there. I have heard him talk of the coal and iron districts. He had travelled a good deal in his time."

"Was he a politician? Had this secret society to do with politics?"

"No; he cared nothing about politics."

"You have no reason to think it was criminal?"

"On the contrary, I never met a straighter man in my life."

"Was there anything curious about his life in California?"

"He liked best to stay and to work at our claim in the mountains. He would never go where other men were if he could help it. That's why I first thought that someone was after him. Then when he left so suddenly for Europe I made sure that it was so. I believe that he had a warning of some sort. Within a week of his leaving half-a-dozen men were inquiring for him."

"What sort of men?"

"Well, they were a mighty hard-looking crowd. They came up to the claim and wanted to know where he was. I told them that he was gone to Europe and that I did not know where to find him. They meant him no good—it was easy to see that."

"Were these men Americans — Californians?"

"Well, I don't know about Californians. They were Americans all right. But they were not miners. I don't know what they were, and was very glad to see their backs."

"That was six years ago?"

"Nearer seven."

"And then you were together five years in California, so that this business dates back not less than eleven years at the least?"

"That is so."

"It must be a very serious feud that would be kept up with such earnestness for as long as that. It would be no light thing that would give rise to it."

"I think it shadowed his whole life. It was never quite out of his mind."

"But if a man had a danger hanging over him, and knew what it was, don't you think he would turn to the police for protection?"

"Maybe it was some danger that he could not be protected against. There's one thing you should know. He always went about armed. His revolver was never out of his pocket. But, by bad luck, he was in his dressing-gown and had left it in the bedroom last night. Once the bridge was up I guess he thought he was safe."

"I should like these dates a little clearer," said MacDonald. "It is quite six years since Douglas left California. You followed him next year, did you not?"

"That is so."

"And he has been married five years. You must have returned about the time of his marriage."

"About a month before. I was his best man."

"Did you know Mrs. Douglas before her marriage?"

"No, I did not. I had been away from England for ten years."

"But you have seen a good deal of her since?"

Barker looked sternly at the detective.

"I have seen a good deal of *him* since," he answered. "If I have seen her, it is because you cannot visit a man without knowing his wife. If you imagine there is any connection——"

"I imagine nothing, Mr. Barker. I am bound to make every inquiry which can bear upon the case. But I mean no offence."

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"Some inquiries are offensive," Barker answered, angrily.

"It's only the facts that we want. It is in your interest and everyone's interests that they should be cleared up. Did Mr. Douglas entirely approve your friendship with his wife?"

Barker grew paler, and his great strong hands were clasped convulsively together.

"You have no right to ask such questions!" he cried. "What has this to do with the matter you are investigating?"

"I must repeat the question."

"Well, I refuse to answer."

"You can refuse to answer, but you must be aware that your refusal is in itself an answer, for you would not refuse if you had not something to conceal."

Barker stood for a moment with his face set grimly and his strong black eyebrows drawn low in intense thought. Then he looked up with a smile.

"Well, I guess you gentlemen are only doing your clear duty, after all, and that I have no right to stand in the way of it. I'd only ask you not to worry Mrs. Douglas over this matter, for she has enough upon her just now. I may tell you that poor Douglas had just one fault in the world, and that was his jealousy. He was fond of me—no man could be fonder of a friend. And he was devoted to his wife. He loved me to come here and was for ever sending for me. And yet if his wife and I talked together or there seemed any sympathy between us, a kind of wave of jealousy would pass over him and he would be off the handle and saying the wildest things in a moment. More than once I've sworn off coming for that reason, and then he would write me such penitent, imploring letters that I just had to. But you can take it from me, gentlemen, if it was my last word, that no man ever had a more loving, faithful wife—and I can say, also, no friend could be more loyal than I."

It was spoken with fervour and feeling, and yet Inspector MacDonald could not dismiss the subject.

"You are aware," said he, "that the dead man's wedding-ring has been taken from his finger?"

"So it appears," said Barker.

"What do you mean by 'appears'? You know it as a fact."

The man seemed confused and undecided.

"When I said 'appears,' I meant that it was conceivable that he had himself taken off the ring."

"The mere fact that the ring should be absent, whoever may have removed it, would suggest to anyone's mind, would it not, that the marriage and the tragedy were connected?"

Barker shrugged his broad shoulders.

"I can't profess to say what it suggests," he answered. "But if you mean to hint that it could reflect in any way upon this lady's honour"—his eyes blazed for an instant, and then with an evident effort he got a grip upon his own emotions—"well, you are on the wrong track, that's all."

"I don't know that I've anything else to ask you at present," said MacDonald, coldly.

"There was one small point," remarked Sherlock Holmes. "When you entered the room there was only a candle lighted upon the table, was there not?"

"Yes, that was so."

"By its light you saw that some terrible incident had occurred?"

"Exactly."

"You at once rang for help?"

"Yes."

"And it arrived very speedily?"

"Within a minute or so."

"And yet when they arrived they found that the candle was out and that the lamp had been lighted. That seems very remarkable."

Again Barker showed some signs of indecision.

"I don't see that it was remarkable, Mr. Holmes," he answered, after a pause. "The candle threw a very bad light. My first thought was to get a better one. The lamp was on the table, so I lit it."

"And blew out the candle?"

"Exactly."

Holmes asked no further question, and Barker, with a deliberate look from one to the other of us, which had, as it seemed to me, something of defiance in it, turned and left the room.

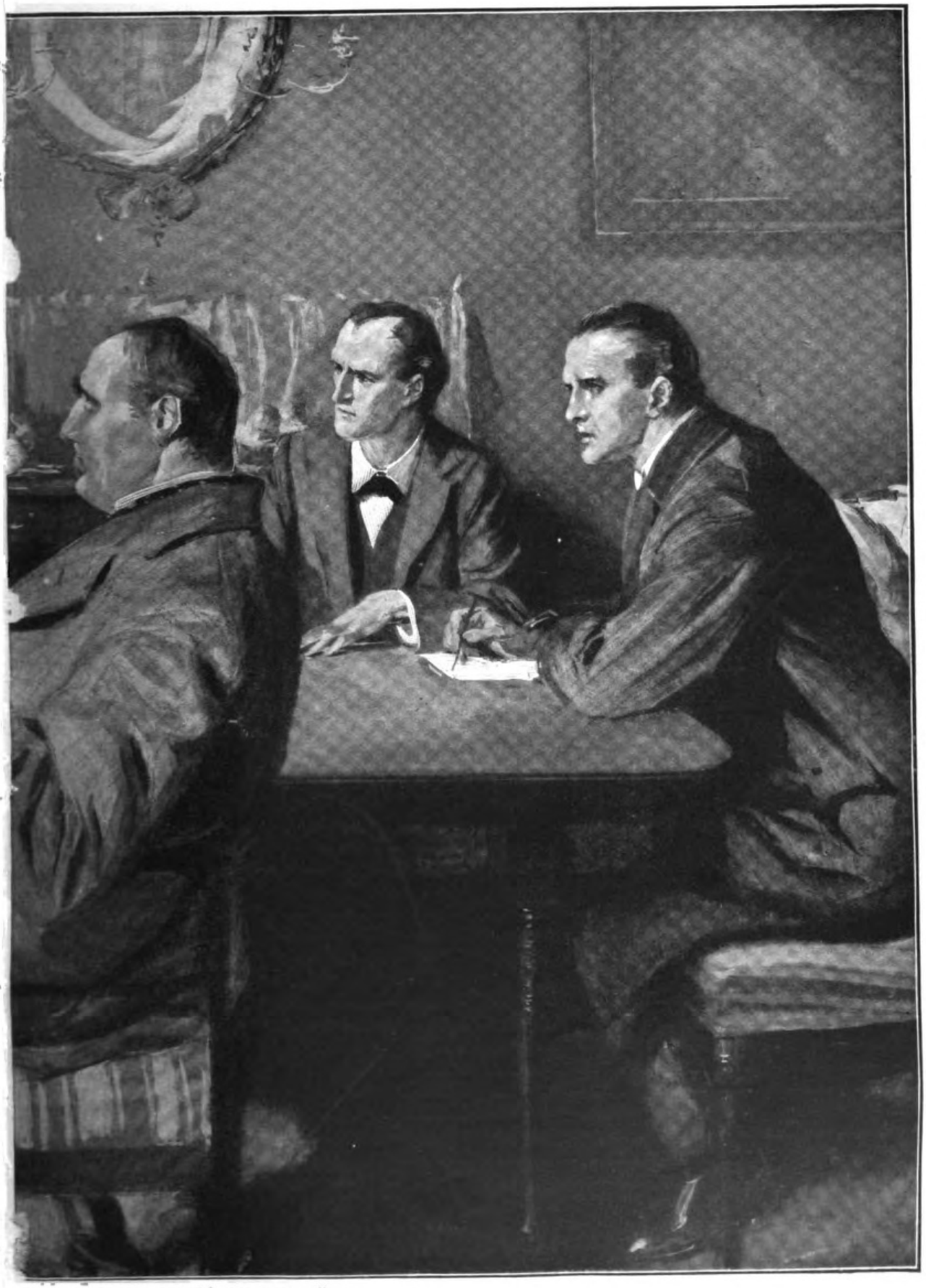
Inspector MacDonald had sent up a note to the effect that he would wait upon Mrs. Douglas in her room, but she had replied that she would meet us in the dining-room. She entered now, a tall and beautiful woman of thirty, reserved and self-possessed to a remarkable degree, very different from the tragic and distracted figure that I had pictured. It is true that her face was pale and drawn, like that of one who has endured a great shock, but her manner was composed, and the finely-moulded hand which she rested upon the edge of the table was as steady as my own. Her sad, appealing eyes travelled from one to the other of us with a curiously

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"HAVE YOU FOUND OUT

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ANYTHING YET?' SHE ASKED."

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inquisitive expression. That questioning gaze transformed itself suddenly into abrupt speech.

"Have you found out anything yet?" she asked.

Was it my imagination that there was an undertone of fear rather than of hope in the question?

"We have taken every possible step, Mrs. Douglas," said the inspector. "You may rest assured that nothing will be neglected."

"Spare no money," she said, in a dead, even tone. "It is my desire that every possible effort should be made."

"Perhaps you can tell us something which may throw some light upon the matter."

"I fear not, but all I know is at your service."

"We have heard from Mr. Cecil Barker that you did not actually see—that you were never in the room where the tragedy occurred?"

"No; he turned me back upon the stairs. He begged me to return to my room."

"Quite so. You had heard the shot and you had at once come down."

"I put on my dressing-gown and then came down."

"How long was it after hearing the shot that you were stopped on the stair by Mr. Barker?"

"It may have been a couple of minutes. It is so hard to reckon time at such a moment. He implored me not to go on. He assured me that I could do nothing. Then Mrs. Allen, the housekeeper, led me upstairs again. It was all like some dreadful dream."

"Can you give us any idea how long your husband had been downstairs before you heard the shot?"

"No, I cannot say. He went from his dressing-room and I did not hear him go. He did the round of the house every night, for he was nervous of fire. It is the only thing that I have ever known him nervous of."

"That is just the point which I want to come to, Mrs. Douglas. You have only known your husband in England, have you not?"

"Yes. We have been married five years."

"Have you heard him speak of anything which occurred in America and which might bring some danger upon him?"

Mrs. Douglas thought earnestly before she answered.

"Yes," she said at last. "I have always felt that there was a danger hanging over him. He refused to discuss it with me. It was not from want of confidence in me—there was the most complete love and confidence between us—but it was out of his desire to keep all alarm away from me. He thought I should brood over it if I knew all, and so he was silent."

"How did you know it, then?"

Mrs. Douglas's face lit with a quick smile.

"Can a husband ever carry about a secret all his life and a woman who loves him have no suspicion of it? I knew it in many ways. I knew it by his refusal to talk about some episodes in his American life. I knew it by certain precautions he took. I knew it by certain words he let fall. I knew it by the way he looked at unexpected strangers. I was perfectly certain that he had some powerful enemies, that he believed they were on his track and that he was always on his guard against them. I was so sure of it that for years I have been terrified if ever he came home later than was expected."

"Might I ask," said Holmes, "what the words were which attracted your attention?"

"'The Valley of Fear,'" the lady answered. "That was an expression he has used when I questioned him. 'I have been in the Valley of Fear. I am not out of it yet.' 'Are we never to get out of the Valley of Fear?' I have asked him, when I have seen him more serious than usual. 'Sometimes I think that we never shall,' he has answered."

"Surely you asked him what he meant by the Valley of Fear?"

"I did; but his face would become very grave and he would shake his head. 'It is bad enough that one of us should have been in its shadow,' he said. 'Please God it shall never fall upon you.' It was some real valley in which he had lived and in which something terrible had occurred to him—of that I am certain—but I can tell you no more."

"And he never mentioned any names?"

"Yes; he was delirious with fever once when he had his hunting accident three years ago. Then I remember that there was a name that came continually to his lips. He spoke it with anger and a sort of horror. McGinty was the name — Bodymaster McGinty. I asked him, when he recovered, who Bodymaster McGinty was, and whose body he was master of. 'Never of mine, thank God!' he answered, with a laugh, and that was all I could get from him. But there is a connection between Bodymaster McGinty and the Valley of Fear."

"There is one other point," said Inspector MacDonald. "You met Mr. Douglas in a boarding-house in London, did you not, and

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became engaged to him there? Was there any romance, anything secret or mysterious, about the wedding?"

"There was romance. There is always romance. There was nothing mysterious."

"He had no rival?"

"No; I was quite free."

"You have heard, no doubt, that his wedding-ring has been taken. Does that suggest anything to you? Suppose that some enemy of his old life had tracked him down and committed this crime, what possible reason could he have for taking his wedding-ring?"

For an instant I could have sworn that the faintest shadow of a smile flickered over the woman's lips.

"I really cannot tell," she answered. "It is certainly a most extraordinary thing."

"Well, we will not detain you any longer, and we are sorry to have put you to this trouble at such a time," said the inspector. "There are some other points, no doubt, but we can refer to you as they arise."

She rose, and I was again conscious of that quick, questioning glance with which she had just surveyed us: "What impression has my evidence made upon you?" The question might as well have been spoken. Then, with a bow, she swept from the room.

"She's a beautiful woman—a very beautiful woman," said MacDonald, thoughtfully, after the door had closed behind her. "This man Barker has certainly been down here a good deal. He is a man who might be attractive to a woman. He admits that the dead man was jealous, and maybe he knew best himself what cause he had for jealousy. Then there's that wedding-ring. You can't get past that. The man who tears a wedding-ring off a dead man's—— What do you say to it, Mr. Holmes?"

My friend had sat with his head upon his hands, sunk in the deepest thought. Now he rose and rang the bell.

"Ames," he said, when the butler entered, "where is Mr. Cecil Barker now?"

"I'll see, sir."

He came back in a moment to say that Mr. Barker was in the garden.

"Can you remember, Ames, what Mr. Barker had upon his feet last night when you joined him in the study?"

"Yes, Mr. Holmes. He had a pair of bedroom slippers. I brought him his boots when he went for the police."

"Where are the slippers now?"

"They are still under the chair in the hall."

"Very good, Ames. It is, of course, important for us to know which tracks may be Mr. Barker's and which from outside."

"Yes, sir. I may say that I noticed that the slippers were stained with blood—so, indeed, were my own."

"That is natural enough, considering the condition of the room. Very good, Ames. We will ring if we want you."

A few minutes later we were in the study. Holmes had brought with him the carpet slippers from the hall. As Ames had observed, the soles of both were dark with blood.

"Strange!" murmured Holmes, as he stood in the light of the window and examined them minutely. "Very strange indeed!"

Stooping with one of his quick, feline pounces he placed the slipper upon the blood-mark on the sill. It exactly corresponded. He smiled in silence at his colleagues.

The inspector was transfigured with excitement. His native accent rattled like a stick upon railings.

"Man!" he cried, "there's not a doubt of it! Barker has just marked the window himself. It's a good deal broader than any boot-mark. I mind that you said it was a splay foot, and here's the explanation. But what's the game, Mr. Holmes—what's the game?"

"Aye, what's the game?" my friend repeated, thoughtfully.

White Mason chuckled and rubbed his fat hands together in his professional satisfaction.

"I said it was a snorter!" he cried. "And a real snorter it is!"

*(To be continued.)*

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# Our Friends the Fighting Rajahs.

## SOME INTIMATE CHARACTER-STUDIES, ANECDOTES, AND PERSONAL IMPRESSIONS.

By
SAINT NIHAL SINGH.



**THE MAHARAJAH OF BARODA.**

HIS HIGHNESS, THE FIGURE ON THE LEFT, IS PLAYING CARDS WITH THE AUTHOR.

*Photo. by courtesy of His Highness.*

A SPIRIT that cannot be bent or broken, that knows no fear, that ever is on the alert, possesses the Rajahs who have come and are coming to fight the enemies of the British Empire, and those who, for one reason or another, have to content themselves with placing their soldiers at the service of the King-Emperor and helping to fill the war-chest. Born riders, dead shots, and all-round sportsmen, generalship in war and chivalrous deeds in everyday life are their heritage.

## The Gaekwar of Baroda.

His Highness the Maharajah Gaekwar of Baroda, who has placed his army and all the resources of his State at the disposal of the British-Indian Government at this crisis, is famous for his horsemanship. Though on the wrong side of fifty, he is in the saddle for hours every day.

How simply he lives, despite the fact that his private jewellery is estimated to be worth from two to four millions sterling, can be judged from a story told me by one of his trusted officials. The first time this man came into the presence of his Royal employer, he found two individuals, one dressed very plainly, with not more than a few shillings' worth of clothes on his whole person, and another gaily garbed, as became an Indian Prince. He took it for granted that the plainly-dressed man was the secretary, and that the one in the richly-embroidered robe

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was the Maharajah of Baroda. Not until the supposed secretary had dictated to the newly-hired clerk for eight or nine hours did he learn that the man in muslin was none other than the Gaekwar himself, while the one he had presumed was the ruler was His Highness's brother.

I have seen the Gaekwar formally and informally, have spent weeks with him under the same roof, and taken practically every meal during that period at his table; yet I have never known him to carry a single penny on his person.

The Maharajah of Baroda, like the other Indian rulers, governs a pomp-loving people, and, therefore, has to live in regal style and maintain costly establishments of pages, entertainers, elephants, and fighting animals of all sorts, the usual paraphernalia of Indian royalty. The expenses of his household and these establishments amount to just a little less than four hundred pounds a day. Only a minute fraction of this sum, however, is actually expended on the Maharajah himself. I may relate a pathetic incident to show how His Highness tries to save money when there is famine in his State and his people are suffering from starvation.

A short time ago he was travelling on the Continent during a period of scarcity of food in India. He ordered a meal for himself and his secretary, who was with him. The waiter who took the order found it so ridiculously small that he did not go away at once, but hung about for awhile, uncertain what to do. Finally, not receiving any further instructions, he respectfully asked the secretary :—

" I beg your pardon, sir, but was this order intended for two people, or shall you require anything else ? "

Before the secretary could reply, the Maharajah looked up, with tears in his eyes, and sadly exclaimed :—

" It is meant for two, waiter. I cannot bear to spend money on a lot of food for myself when my subjects are starving at home."

And the two dined on a meal that was sufficient for only one person.

The Maharajah of Baroda is noted for spending the least possible amount of money and driving a very hard bargain. He is a hard taskmaster, and gets his money's worth out of everyone he employs. I have heard it said by more than one of his high officials inclined to be " disgruntled " at the hard tasks imposed upon them that His Highness squeezes blood out of every copper he spends.

However, when the Gaekwar finds that he cannot escape paying out money, he spends with grim humour. A story drifted to me through his Indian barber, who attends upon him as a valet and constantly travels about with him from continent to continent, which illustrates this trait in his character.

His Highness grew tired of spending large amounts of money in living in hotels during his many trips to Bombay, or upon hiring uncomfortable bungalows in that Indian metropolis only a night's journey from his capital. He therefore ordered that a site on the Nepean Sea Road, overlooking a glorious view of the Bay of Bombay, should be bought, and that a pure white structure should be erected on it for his residence. The estimates were carefully made and approved, but unforeseen difficulties cropped up, and the cost greatly exceeded the estimate. One day when the Maharajah was fretting over the amount of money that his palace on the Nepean Sea Road had cost him, a friend inquired what he meant to call it. Quick as a shot came the reply that " White Elephant " would do justice to its white exterior and also to its costliness.

His Highness's sense of humour never deserts him, and he has a magnificant control over his temper. He is not in the habit of using sharp language in addressing his servants or officials.

Above all, the Maharajah is human, and has abundant sympathy for all about him. On one occasion he found a servant crying, and finding that his distress was caused by harsh words spoken by his superior, comforted him by saying that, after all, " hard words break no bones."

At another time he found a policeman warding off someone who wished to speak to him while he was driving in his silver chariot. He at once stopped, inquired into the matter, and gave money to the mendicant, who was anxious to secure the railway fare to go to Benares to prosecute higher studies in Sanskrit at that ancient seat of learning.

The Maharajah of Baroda is accessible to all his subjects, especially to those who are poor, who come from the rural districts, or who belong to the lowest stratum of Hindu society. His compassion for those subjects of his who are called " untouchables " by the high-caste Hindus, and treated as if they were lepers, is so great that he has established special schools, some of them of a residential character, for their especial benefit, and has passed special ordinances which are rapidly raising the status of these helots of Hindu society.

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These lowly ones adore His Highness as if he were the incarnation of one of the gods. While travelling with the Maharajah in his territories in Kathiawar, I came upon a touching scene displaying the warm emotions of these people for their ruler. A lad of twelve or thirteen, belonging to one of the degraded castes, rose out of a great crowd of schoolboys and men and delivered a short oration telling how the cruelty of the high-castes makes the "untouchables" miserable, and how the compassionate policy of the ruler is making their lives happy.

The Maharajah of Baroda's passionate devotion to administration and his long hours at the desk have rendered him a victim of insomnia. At times he cannot sleep unless someone is reading to him in a droning tone of voice, and wakes whenever the reader pauses for a moment. Like many another Indian Prince, he is unable to sleep until his feet have been shampooed by being rubbed with a bronze cup, this metal being reputed to be cooling.

## The Nizam of Hyderabad.

His Highness the Nizam of Hyderabad, who has more than fulfilled his obligations to the British Empire, and who at this critical juncture has gone far beyond what might have been expected of him, of all the Indian rulers has the greatest number of subjects (over thirteen millions), and receives the largest amount of revenue (nearly three million pounds).

He is noted as a sure shot. When the Viceroy invested him, recently, he gave an exhibition of his marksmanship. Bottles were thrown up in the air, and he fired at them, never once failing to hit his mark, and on no occasion injuring those who were throwing up the small glass targets.

I wonder if there is any ruler in the world whose household contains a kitchen that can supply more elaborate meals than that of His Highness the Nizam? Not half-a-dozen, or even a dozen, courses are prepared, as for Royalty in the West, but scores of them are cooked and served for each principal meal, without any delay or friction of any kind. A multitude of rice dishes, no two alike, some salty, some sweet, some flavoured with vegetables, others with meats of various descriptions, each with its own pronounced flavour and different from every other, are daily sent to the Nizam's dining-room. Every kind of meat, game and tame, and vegetables of all sorts, are daily cooked, each in a distinctive style. The idea is not that the ruler shall eat every dish that is set before him, but that there shall be nothing wanting for which he may express the least desire.

The food is served on large salvers cast out of solid gold, not merely plated, some of them encrusted with gems of the purest water. His Highness squats on the floor, on a silken carpet. As a course arrives it is set before him. If he is inclined to taste one of the numerous dishes that are offered him, a trusty servant will put a spoonful of it in his mouth. Seldom does he eat two spoonfuls from the same course, and often dish after dish is sent away untouched.

Everything that returns from His Highness's dining-room becomes the property of certain servants. This food is a part of their perquisites, and they dispose of it with advantage to themselves.

I know of a Rajah who took only one meal a day, and then ate so heartily that he practically deprived his attendants of their perquisites, to which they had been accustomed for generations upon generations. In his bounty he ordered that salvers of food should be prepared in duplicate, one for himself and one for his servants. A European monarch, acting in similar circumstances, would have compensated his adherents in money, but that would not have been the Eastern way.

The wonder is not that hundreds of choice viands are daily prepared for such great rulers as the Nizam of Hyderabad, but that the kitchens that their households possess should be able punctually to turn them out to the exact minute. These kitchens are equipped much as those of the primitive man must have been furnished. All cooking is done on a low hearth made of mud, beside which the cook squats while cooking, with the various articles he needs to use spread out on the floor within easy reach of his hand.

I may add that the Nizam employs cooks of all kinds, men of different Indian races, professing various religions, and gathered from all points of the peninsula. Each man is a specialist in his own branch, and confines himself to preparing only the few dishes at which he is a master-hand.

The present ruler of Hyderabad has had much Western education, and is not the complete Oriental potentate that his father was. The late His Highness Mir Mahbub Ali Shah, for instance, used to come to his audience chamber (Durbar hall) in a tiny

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carriage, drawn over a strip of velvet carpet by a team of small white goats.

It was the present Nizam's father who, in 1887, led the movement for the maintenance of a force with a view to aid Britain in all hours of need. The army that was thus organized is aptly designated the Imperial Service Troops. At present it consists of over twenty-two thousand soldiers, and is maintained by twenty-three States, all of which have offered their contingents for service on the Continent. The reader must not confuse the Imperial Service Troops with either the other troops maintained by the Rajahs, or with the Indian (native) Army and European Army maintained by the British-Indian Government.

The Imperial Service Troops have performed valiant service in many campaigns, and at one time or another some of the Indian Rulers have seen action in charge of detachments of it. Notable amongst these are Sir Pertab Singhji, the Maharajah of Bikanir, and the Maharajah of Gwalior.

I desire to mention prominently that His Highness the present Nizam of Hyderabad is setting an example for Mohammedan rulers by practising strict monogamy.



**THE NIZAM OF HYDERABAD,**

WHO HOLDS SWAY OVER A GREATER NUMBER OF SUBJECTS THAN ANY OTHER INDIAN RULER.

*Photo. Bourne & Sheppard.*

## The Regent of Jodhpur.

The character and career of the indomitable knight of seventy, the oldest amongst the fighting Rajahs, Major-General Sir Pertab Singhji, G.C.V.O., G.C.S.I., the Regent of Jodhpur, until recently the Maharajah of Idar, typifies the character and career of all of them. How wonderful the courage which has brought this Rajpoot warrior of threescore years and ten to the fighting line! During the Coronation of His Majesty King George V., Sir Pertab—as he is called by his British friends—fainted twice in the Abbey, while he was obliged by physical exhaustion to leave the procession. But his spirit is undaunted, and he has fared forth to lay down his life, if need be, for the King-Emperor on the battle-field, as becomes a true Rajpoot soldier. And to the fighting line he comes accompanied by his sixteen-year-old ward, his great-nephew, His Highness Sumer Singhji, the minor Maharajah of Jodhpur.

I may relate a story about Maharajah Pertab Singhji vividly portraying his determined spirit, which comes to me from one of his clansmen, and, I believe, has never been published. One day, in his early manhood, he quarrelled with his brother-in-law, Rajah Ram Singh of Jaipur, and, jumping on his horse, started to ride full-tilt to Jodhpur. After galloping for sixty miles at breakneck speed across rough country, as the crow flies, his horse fell dead of exhaustion. He thereupon removed the saddle and bridle, and, carrying them on his head, started to walk the remaining distance. Night came on. He trudged for five miles, and then, meeting a farmer driving his cart in the direction of Jodhpur, he

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asked him to allow him to ride the rest of the distance. The carter demurred, as the young man, in the heat of his passion, had ridden away from Jaipur without taking any money, and he had not a single penny to pay the advance fee which the yokel demanded. He finally persuaded the Rajpoot Shylock, however, to take him on the promise that he would give him his saddle if he was unable to gather together the money when he reached Jodhpur. Satisfied with this arrangement, the journey was continued. The tired man slept all night lying in the back of the bullock-cart, with his head resting on his saddle.



**MAJOR-GENERAL SIR PERTAB SINGHJI,**
THE OLDEST AMONGST THE FIGHTING RAJAHS.
*Photo. Vandyk.*

The outskirts of Jodhpur were reached just as day dawned, and the noise of the waking city roused the brother of the Maharajah from his slumbers. He sat up in the cart and looked about him, and the people who were passing at once recognized him and ceremoniously saluted him. The driver of the cart suddenly noticed that everyone who passed by was addressing someone as "*Maharaj*," and "Giver of food." He looked around and, in the daylight, saw what he had not been able to discern in the darkness the night before, that his passenger was one of the Ruling Family.

Instantly he stopped his bullocks, jumped out of the cart, and falling on his knees began to pray for forgiveness for his crime of daring to quibble about money, and to ride in the same cart with such an exalted personage. The young man, who was beginning to be very hungry, assured him that his sins of omission and commission were all forgiven, and ordered him to get back on the seat and drive him on to the palace, where he could eat his breakfast.

The carter, however, would not be persuaded to do such a thing. To him it appeared the grossest sacrilege to defile with his person the cart in which the brother of his Maharajah was riding. Finally, in desperation, Maharajah Pertab was forced to take the reins himself and drive the bullock-cart to the palace.

Some idea of Maharajah Pertab Singhji's fair-mindedness may be gained from the fact that on more than one occasion he has refused to shoot a sleepy lion or tiger. It is a part of

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his sporting philosophy either to let alone a drowsy and tired beast of the jungle, or to stir him up by throwing stones at him before shooting him.

He specially takes delight in killing a lion or a tiger with a single thrust of his sword, instead of shooting it from a distance.

Numerous are the hairbreadth escapes of this soldier-hunter, who has already seen active service in the defence of British interests in the Kabul Mission of 1878; in the Muhmand Expedition of 1897 (as Extra A.D.C. to General Ellis); in the Tirah Campaign in 1898 (as Extra A.D.C. to General Sir William Lockhart, in which service he was wounded, being mentioned in despatches); and with the Expeditionary Force to China in 1900, in command of the Jodhpur Imperial Service Troops.

To relate just one incident: Some years ago, when Maharajah Pertab Singhji was pig-sticking, a boar suddenly charged him. With cool nerve he waited until the wild beast was right under his horse's heels, then quickly jumped his steed over it, at the same time striking downwards at it with his spear, instantly killing it.

Maharajah Pertab Singhji inherits not only the fighting qualities and chivalry of his brave forbears, whose rule has extended, in some part or other of India, from a prehistoric period; but he has also inherited the sharp wit of his ancestors. He gave a splendid exhibition of it on one occasion when he was assailed by Brahmins for cutting down the fees and honorariums that they had been accustomed to derive from the State as the priests of the established church, and for ordering that all the images should be placed in one temple, instead of being distributed in many.

When the Brahmins questioned these orders, he asked them if they ever visited their relatives at a distance.

Of course they answered that they did.

"Do you enjoy seeing them after you have been separated from them for a long time?" he next asked.

They assured him that they were transported with joy on such occasions.

"Then," he remarked, "how gratified the gods and goddesses must be to be in each other's company in one temple, after they have been separated for such a long time. Can't you imagine how happy Lakshmi (the Goddess of Good Fortune) must be to meet Sarasvati (the Goddess of Learning), and Vishnu (the Creator) to visit Shiva (the Destroyer)? Besides," he continued, "think how much money will be saved to the State if the people can do homage to all the gods and goddesses at one time, in one temple, instead of having to go to so many different temples to worship them."

The Brahmins were speechless. His wit won the day.

In private life Maharajah Pertab Singhji is the soul of generosity. He is the kind of man who would give the very horse he was riding, if he had nothing else to bestow.

## The Young Sikh Hero, the Maharajah of Patiala.

At the other end of the scale of fighting Rajahs, in repect of age, is the young Maharajah of Patiala. His Highness Sir Bhupindra Singh, G.C.I.E., F.R.G.S., F.R.Z.S., M.R.A.S., M.R.S.A., typifies all that is best and bravest in the Indian Rulers of our generation. Only about twenty-three years old, he belongs to the soldierly race of Sikhs.

To-day the Maharajah of Patiala stands in relation to his community as did his grandfather, His Highness Maharajah Narinder Singh, at the time of the Indian Sepoy Mutiny of 1857. Then, when approached by the Deputy-Commissioner of the District to learn whether he was for or against the British, Maharajah Narinder Singh replied:—

"As long as I live I am yours."

To-day Maharajah Bhupindra Singh has come forward with the alacrity and zeal with which his grandfather rushed to smite the Hindu and Moslem mutineers.

The present Maharajah of Patiala is a soldier to the backbone, and can bear great fatigue. When out with his troops on manœuvres, he lives the strictest possible life, sleeping on a pile of straw in a tent, and going without chairs or other furniture, eating his meals from a brass dish, just as all the other soldiers do. He is so deeply attached to the profession of arms that not long ago, when one of the leading Maharajahs spoke to him about the advisability of cutting down his military establishment with a view to reducing the expenditure on this head, he rebuked his adviser, and said:—

"What good is a Rajah without an army? I only wish I could afford to increase the strength of my forces. I certainly would never dream of decreasing it merely to save money."

He is not only ready to preach this military gospel, but acts upon it. He spends about one-sixth of his total annual State revenue (£500,000, in rough figures) upon the maintenance of his army.



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So clever a marksman is the Maharajah of Patiala that he brings down practically every black buck at which he shoots, while racing it in a motor-car driven across rough country at the rate of sixty miles an hour. His great ambition is to secure the world's championship in black-buck shooting. On the walls of his favourite room in the palace is a head with horns just under the length of those constituting the world's record.

He seldom hunts black buck except while riding in a motor-car. There are about fifty or sixty cars in the State, all of them standard makes and bought for a very high price; yet seldom are there more than four or five cars at a time which are in condition to be used, as he drives them so hard while hunting. He packs sometimes as many as twenty-six men into a car meant to hold five persons, and darts away in it across streams and hedges, giving the word to his chauffeur to jump all obstructions with the machine, just as if it were a thoroughbred charger.

On one such occasion, the car—a ninety-horse power Fiat—failed to clear the fence, and rested on the top of it, all four wheels whizzing like mad as it hung suspended in the air!

The buck which he shoots are carried over the mud-guards, one over each guard, held by the feet by two men, with the dripping head hanging down.

On another occasion, when the Maharajah of Patiala, accompanied by ten men, was racing to the hunting-field in a sixty-horse power Mercedes car, a madman suddenly rushed out and threw a baby into the middle of the road in front of the approaching machine. Without waiting a moment to think, the Maharajah, who was driving the car, threw on all the brakes. Although the wheels were solidly set by the brakes, the car skidded on. With a quick turn of the wrist the Maharajah swerved the car so that it just escaped the baby, but ran into the brick house of a railway guard, completely tearing out the wall on one side of it. Neither the baby nor any of the party was harmed in the least; but this did not alter the fact that His Highness had risked the lives of eleven men, himself included, in order to save the life of a little child.

When boar-hunting His Highness generally rides on the back of an elephant. He is a dashing polo-player, and is devoted to cricket. Not long ago he came to this country heading an All-India cricket team, and played brilliantly.

Maharajah Bhupindra Singh's love for soldiering, hunting, and motoring does not exceed his passion for making a good appearance. He is extremely fastidious about clothes, and always insists upon wearing a suitable garb for each particular occasion. When travelling in his special car or returning from manœuvres or the chase, no matter how tired he may be he always changes his dress to his State robes before receiving the officials who come to greet him, and he always insists that they shall wear their State dress when coming to him. This sometimes causes considerable inconvenience to those who have to come into his presence, but his rule in this respect is rigid.

Usually His Highness dresses in pure white, and always in Indian costume. He has even had a crown made which he can wear over his turban. So patriotic is he that, on no pretext or occasion whatsoever, does he permit one of his officials to come before him dressed in European costume.

His love for ear-rings amounts to a passion. So long as he has them he does not care much for other jewellery. Indeed, he seldom or never wears any other ornaments except on ceremonial State occasions. He has ear-rings of all descriptions, containing gems of all sorts, and wears them day and night, whether he is with his troops, or hunting, or looking after State affairs, or enjoying himself in the zenana, or attending some social function.

How strict he is as an administrator is shown by the fact that soon after being invested with ruling powers, in 1909, in his eighteenth year, he put an end to the time-honoured practice of officials going to their offices at all hours of the day, or remaining away at will. He ordered that even the very highest officials must enter in a book the exact time when they arrived at and left their offices. He is a strict disciplinarian. One of his A.D.C.'s went away to study on Thursday. On Sunday he grew homesick and came back to Patiala to see his family and friends. The Maharajah saw him and rebuked him for returning so soon, and ordered him to take the first train back to college and not show himself in Patiala again until his course was finished.

In matters pertaining to the collection and expenditure of revenue he is more painstaking and careful than the head of any commercial or financial concern in the West. He scans each individual item, no matter how small, of the Budget, and makes his officials give a satisfactory explanation if the income falls below or the expenditure

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exceeds by a penny the budgeted amount.

This strict man of affairs can graciously unbend when he wishes to do so. He can be all smiles, and generally is the soul of courtesy. Good breeding he has inherited so bounteously that he has acquired a reputation for his courtly manner both in the East and in the West.

To those who associate pomp and glory with the native Courts, his private life will come as a surprise and even as a disappointment. Although his large palace is luxuriously furnished in European style, he actually occupies only one small room in it, which he has furnished to suit himself. Its walls are lined with the heads of black buck that he has shot. In the centre of the room is a plain table and a few chairs. Here he spends most of his waking hours when he is not in the hunting-field or out with his troops. You will see him, in the daytime, sitting beneath the arch of the gate, eating his food in Indian style from a tray containing a number of small basins, with his friends seated on the stone steps of the palace, dining in the same simple way. He is exceedingly fond of small birds, but dislikes to take the trouble to cut their meat from the bones. To avoid this, he has a trusted servant sit beside him and tear the flesh away and place it before him ready to be swallowed without any annoying delay.



**THE MAHARAJAH OF PATIALA.**
THIS YOUNG SIKH HERO IS ONLY ABOUT TWENTY-THREE YEARS OLD.
*Photo. Vandyk.*

When the evening shades deepen and the time comes for the last meal of the day, he is to be found in his sparsely-furnished office. His food is placed before him on the table in the centre of the room. All about, squatting on the floor, are his courtiers, their trays set before them. When the meal is finished, they sit on the floor in parties of four, playing cards, the Maharajah joining first one group and then another.

A door in one side of this room leads to the zenana. The Maharanee of Patiala is the daughter of General Gurnam Singh, one of the Sikh heroes of the present day. Maharajah Bhupindra Singh has a son, born recently, who will succeed him, and a daughter.

His passionate devotion to his people is summed up in his own words :—

"If you get money out of people, when the time comes you must die with the people. You must not try to amass money so that you can run away and live in comfort somewhere else if trouble comes."

Stories of the dash and daring of the Indian rulers, their capacity for work, and their dignified manner, could be multiplied almost without end. But enough has been said to show that in possessing the co-operation of these personages the British Empire has an asset whose value cannot be over-estimated.

[*Next month we shall publish another article, in which Mr. Singh will give intimate sketches of the Maharajahs of Gwalior, Bikanir, Cooch Behar, Kishengarh, and others.*]

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# THE SIGNAL.

## By VIOLET M. METHLEY.

### Illustrated by H. M. Brock, R.I.

WITH a sharp exclamation Michel Gasparin swung round from the little window of the signal station.

"Emil, wake up!" he cried, hoarsely.

The big man opened his sleepy blue eyes.

"What's the matter?" he murmured.

"For Heaven's sake, wake up! Can't you see that I'm not joking?"

For the first time Emil glanced at the haggard face of the younger man, and forthwith swung his feet from the bench with a movement unexpectedly alert.

"What's the matter?" he repeated, but this time there was no sleepiness in his voice.

"It's Colette, Emil."

"What about her?"

"I was on the look-out, turning the telescope this way and that, and I saw—two men held her; they were dragging her away——"

"Great heavens! Poor girl!"

"I must go to her. 'Twas less than a mile away. I may be in time; I *will* be in time."

"'Tis against the rules for you to leave your post, Michel."

"What do I care? I'd go if the devil himself stood in my way, much less a set of printed rules. For pity's sake, man, don't try to stop me. You can keep watch alone; you could send through a message without me, and who'd be the wiser? I'll stay no more to argue!" And he was gone.

It was a breathless summer noon, yet Michel scarcely felt the heat as he ran, sliding, down the slippery turf of the low hill upon which the telegraph station stood.

Behind him rose the twenty-foot-high post, with its transverse balance beam, towering up like an ungainly gallows. At its base stood the wooden shanty with its single small square window, through which stuck the nozzle of the big brass telescope, winking in the sun. It was one of a long chain, this semaphore station, which extended from the roof of the Louvre to the battlements of Lille. By means of that chain the Great Committee at work in the Tuileries could send its mandates to the armies on the frontier at the rate of more than a hundred miles an hour. It was an invention which had wonderfully strengthened the hands of the rulers of the Republic since Chappe had perfected it in the preceding autumn of 1793.

At each of the stations two men were on duty all through the hours of daylight—one to write down the signal, the other to transmit it to the next post. The purport of those vital messages was unknown to the intermediate operators; they were a mere jumble of sixteen letter signs, formed by sixteen positions of the semaphore's arms, the respective meanings of which were changed weekly.

Two men always on duty—and one of them was running at full speed from his post. Emil, an old sailor and a believer in rigid discipline, watched his comrade's precipitate flight with disapproval, although knowing himself quite capable of transmitting a signal alone.

Gasparin's frenzied distress left no room for self-reproach. His hot Latin nature had been aflame with love for fair-haired Colette ever since, but a few weeks before, she had come to the little village down there in the valley as a serving-maid to the tavern-keeper.

Again and again across his mind flashed the vision of what he had observed in the field of the telescope. He had seen a little clearing amongst the trees, and, suddenly emerging into it, a group of three people. Two men in rough peasant's dress dragged between

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them a girl who struggled and writhed. Her fair hair fell in a great loosened coil over her shoulders, her upturned face was white and distorted. Her mouth cried inaudibly for help to him—him, Michel Gasparin, who had sworn himself her honest and faithful lover.

He would answer that dumb appeal—aye, if life itself had weighed down the other side of the balance.

Gasparin reached the wood and plunged into the thick undergrowth.

"Help! Ah, help!"

He had expected the sound, and yet it came with the force of an unlooked-for blow upon his heart.

Gasparin had not far to go; almost immediately he came upon those whom he sought, face to face. At the sound of her rescuer's headlong approach the girl started.

"Michel! Michel!" she panted, and it seemed that her voice was almost inarticulate with mingled joy and shame. "Oh, Michel, I so hoped you would come!"

The young man wasted no time in words or threats. He flung all his wiry weight against the nearer of the two men, sending him staggering backwards. Unprepared for so rapid an assault, the fellow relaxed his hold of the girl's wrist and fell headlong amongst the bracken, whilst Gasparin turned fiercely upon his companion.

This other showed himself but a poor coward—unwilling to fight or even to defend himself. With a yelp of fear he tried to push the girl between himself and his assailant, but not before he had received a swinging blow upon the side of the head. He waited for no more. Clasping his pate with both hands, the craven dashed past Gasparin out of the little glade, followed precipitately by his companion, who had scrambled to his feet.

Their victor stared after them, breathing heavily with his haste and exertions, but fiercely exultant at this easy rout of the enemy. Next moment, his thoughts swerving quickly to another quarter, he knelt beside the girl, who had sunk to the ground and lay face downwards, her hair all tangled about her shoulders.

"Colette—Colette!" Gasparin's voice was very gentle; his fierce black eyes had grown wonderfully soft and tender. "Look up, dear heart. Do not be frightened. I am here to protect you."

The girl did not raise her head, nor answer by so much as a word; only her shoulders shook, as though with sobs.

On his knees beside Colette, Gasparin slipped one arm round her; but she shrank away with a faint, inarticulate moan. Perplexed and distressed, he continued his persuasions and entreaties, until of a sudden she sat up, pushing him aside. The words died away on Gasparin's lips at the sight of the white misery in her face. This was another being from the laughing girl who had suffered him to kiss her in the tavern doorway last night.

"Colette, dearest, let me help you. Ah, tell me what I can do," he begged, imploringly.

"You can do nothing." She spoke for the first time, and her voice was cold and strangely hard. "You—you had better leave me."

"But—oh, my love, do not send me away from you like this!" The words broke from him in dismay, but they met with no response.

Gasparin rose to his feet at last with a gesture of despair. Had he failed her, or she him? He could not say; but at least his duty remained to be performed. He was about to turn away, when suddenly Colette struggled to her knees with a sharp cry. The frozen agony in her face had changed to a look almost of terror; she held out her hands towards him as though in entreaty.

"No, no; you must not go—you must not!" she cried, wildly. Then, as he paused, perplexed, she seemed to strive for greater calmness. "I—I—— Leave me, if you wish, but go some other way, not in the same direction as—as—the others. They may attack you, and it is two to one."

"Two of *them!*" Gasparin laughed vainGloriously. "But do you need me, then, sweetheart?"

"No, no!" She shrank away once more with upraised hands. "I—— You had better go—only not that way."

"Why, I can return by no other to the signal station."

"Do not go there, then."

"Faith, you've kept me from my duty for long enough as it is, dear one!"

"Don't go—don't go! Ah, believe me, there is danger!"

"Danger?"

"Yes. Oh, I know it—it is true!"

For an instant Gasparin stared into her wide, terrified eyes, reading there the same story as her lips had told. For an instant only, then he swung round on his heel.

"Danger? Then all the more reason that I should go!"

Colette started forward, clutching at his sleeve; but the young man dragged himself away roughly, paying no heed to her half-frenzied protests. Without waiting for more explanations, he was gone.

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He was clear of the trees now; the hillock on which the telegraph station stood rose from the open ground before him. And there was no sign of disturbance, no suggestion of danger.

He ran up the steep slope, hardly able to keep his footing on the slippery turf. The door of the shanty stood open as he had left it.

Half blinded by the sweat which ran down his face, dizzy with haste and heat, Gasparin reached the entrance of the hut, stopped short there, clutching at the door-post. His black eyes dilated, his face whitened with horror as he stared down at the body of Emil Garon, lying dead at his feet.

It seemed impossible that Emil should be dead—Emil, who was so big and strong, and who laughed at everything!

Suddenly the band of sunshine which lay across the dead man's face was shadowed, and at the same moment Gasparin's arms were seized and dragged behind his back.

He struggled violently to free himself from the gripping hands; then, furious at his own helplessness, twisted his head, to see the two men who had fled from him in the wood so short a time before.

They showed no signs of fear or cowardice now as they held him fast, laughing at his vain efforts to escape. Seen close at hand thus, they seemed tall and strongly-built fellows, with a well-drilled air about them at variance with their peasant's dress.

One of them spoke at last, using the French language, although with a harsh and guttural accent.

"Gently, gently, my fine fellow. You'll do no good by violence. Here's the result of flying to the rescue of distressed maidens, eh?"



"TWO MEN IN ROUGH PEASANT'S DRESS DRAGGED BETWEEN THEM A GIRL WHO STRUGGLED AND WRITHED."

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He laughed coarsely, and his companion joined in the mirth, interrupting himself to ask, in a matter-of-fact manner :—

"Well, are we to knock this one on the head, too, Felten?"

"No, I do not think so—at least, not yet, Schneider. He may be useful to us. Bring him outside."

Between them they dragged Gasparin out once more into the sunshine. There they bound him hand and foot to the base of the post, whilst he who seemed the leader of the two glanced up mockingly at the gaunt arms.

"Here we have a most suitable gallows ready prepared—if we need it," he scoffed. "The signalman hanged with his own rope—eh, my friend? But you shall have no chance of using them before the time comes."

He untwisted the halliards from the hook which secured them at the base of the pole, and, mounting on his companion's shoulders, fastened the coil ten feet or more above the ground.

Meanwhile their prisoner said not a word—scarcely resisted their rough handling. Blow after blow had fallen upon him with bewildering rapidity—the swift passage of events in the wood; Emil's death; the consciousness that he was in a measure to blame, and a sense that the knowledge of a worse thing lurked in the background, a knowledge from which he shrank unspeakably.

But the man Felten dragged out that horror into the light of day.

"After this, my friend, you'll scarcely be ready to trust a woman again—if you have the chance."

"He-he-he!" the second man chuckled. "How the girl squealed! They're good actresses, the wenches are! I warrant she made him believe that she loved him, poor wretch!"

The shadow of a great dread darkened Michel Gasparin's eyes, but he found his voice at last in a brave effort to drive it away.

"Liars and traitors that you are!" he groaned, fiercely. "I'll not believe one word against—her!"

"Oh, you doting fool!" mocked the other. "Can't you see, even now, how she has duped you? She's one of us, I tell you. She came from Metz to this simple village of yours to pave the way for our plans, and she did it well. You've been in her toils from the first, dolt that you were—to love and ask no questions!"

"She loved me!" The words sounded like a cry of despair.

"As she has loved a hundred others, I'll be bound—just so much as will serve the cause she works for. Oh, she's a brave one, little Colette! Men fight with firearms and swords; women have different weapons, and I don't say worse."

"It was a clever trick, that last." The second man laughed contentedly. "And her invention, too! She guessed that she could lure you away from the signal station, so that we should only have one of you to reckon with. She planned that you should see our little comedy and fly to the rescue, that you should stay and console her, giving us time to finish our work here."

Gasparin's agonized eyes passed from one to the other of the pitiless, jeering faces. He did not doubt what they said; he knew that it was the truth—the truth which he had tried to hide from himself ever since he read it obscurely in the girl's eyes down there in the wood.

She had betrayed him, then; he was one more in the long line of those who have been fooled by a woman. Through that madness of his Emil had died, and—what more? Felten answered the unspoken question.

"Yes, our plans worked out well. We need not keep them a secret from you, my friend; very certainly you cannot defeat them, and, as I said, we may need your help. There is a message that we wish to send to the frontier."

"If I would, I can tell you nothing. We signalmen do not know the cipher code."

The other smiled at the dreary triumph in Gasparin's voice.

"Very likely, my good friend; but I myself know it for this week. Even the secrets of your Great Committee may sometimes be discovered."

He seated himself, immediately within the shelter of the doorway, a few feet from Gasparin. Schneider followed his example, sprawling on the ground and pulling a short pipe from his pocket. Stretching his legs with a luxurious yawn, Felten looked up at his helpless captive.

"Ah, that's better. As I was telling you, I know the key to this week's cipher. We shall wait until the next signal comes through from Paris. After reading it we shall transmit a message to Lille—but not the same one. In fact, the results of it will be very different. All quite simple, you see."

"And you imagine that I will help you?"

The other shrugged his shoulders.

"I think that very likely you will, if it comes to a question of that or death. But we shall see. And in the meantime"—he

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also drew a pipe from his pocket—"in the meantime, we have nothing to do but wait. The Committee does not sit until four o'clock this afternoon, so that there is no likelihood of a message until after that time. You see that we are very well informed. Phew! but it's hot."

Tilting their caps over their eyes, the two Germans lounged at ease, puffing at their pipes contentedly and exchanging an occasional word or two.

Outside, in the blazing sunlight, Gasparin strained against his bonds, trying to evolve some coherent plan out of the chaos in his brain. He realized now the full measure of his punishment. Through that madness of his, not only had Emil died, but France was on the point of betrayal. If this false message was sent, speeding from one station to another until it reached the commandant at Lille, what might not be the result?

And yet, bound and helpless, he must see this done. He almost found it in his heart to envy Emil, who lay there in the hut, untouched by what passed around him.

Ah, curses on the sun! His brain swam with the heat, so that he could not think clearly; a red mist floated before his eyes. His head was splitting with agony, and he turned it sideways, resting his cheek against the post.

The brass nozzle of the telescope, protruding from its little window at about the level of his shoulder, caught the sun's rays, winking before Gasparin's aching eyes. He stared at it, dazed into a kind of hypnotic state, so that his tortures of body and mind alike became for a little space unreal. Then suddenly something which seemed almost like an inspiration stabbed him back to full consciousness. And still he stared at the telescope, winking and blinking in the sunshine.

A hot, brooding silence hung over the country-side. Nothing could be heard save the drowsy hum of bees, the distant croon of doves, until suddenly a loud snore broke the stillness. Gasparin turned his head. One of the two Germans was frankly slumbering; the other hung upon the very brink of sleep.

If prayer had not become a thing as strange and unaccustomed to Gasparin as to most men of his day, he would have prayed then. Squeezing his body into the smallest possible compass, deflating his lungs, crushing himself together, as it were, he struggled for freedom. The cords which held his right arm seemed to have become somewhat slackened; he could move it slightly. Breathless with the fierce exertion, his ears alert to catch the faintest sound from the sleeping men, he strained against the ropes.

They yielded—a little more—and again—but still held him fast. Another violent effort. He had moved the arm upwards, although the wrench had dragged the shirt from his shoulder, tearing the skin, so that he could feel blood trickling over his hand. He was scarcely conscious of any pain as he struggled fiercely, desperately, until his right arm was free.

Gasparin made no attempt to loosen the ropes which still held his left arm and both legs as securely as ever. Probably, since his right hand was at liberty, five minutes would have sufficed to extricate himself completely, but those five minutes he could not spare. At any instant his captors might awake and discover what he would be at before the work was finished.

Very softly Gasparin's hand stole sideways to the telescope; very gently he gripped the nozzle and began to unscrew the lens. The tiny grating sound magnified itself a thousandfold in his ears. Catching at his breath convulsively, he glanced towards the sleeping men. But they had not stirred; their snores came with reassuring regularity. A few more twists and the lens was detached.

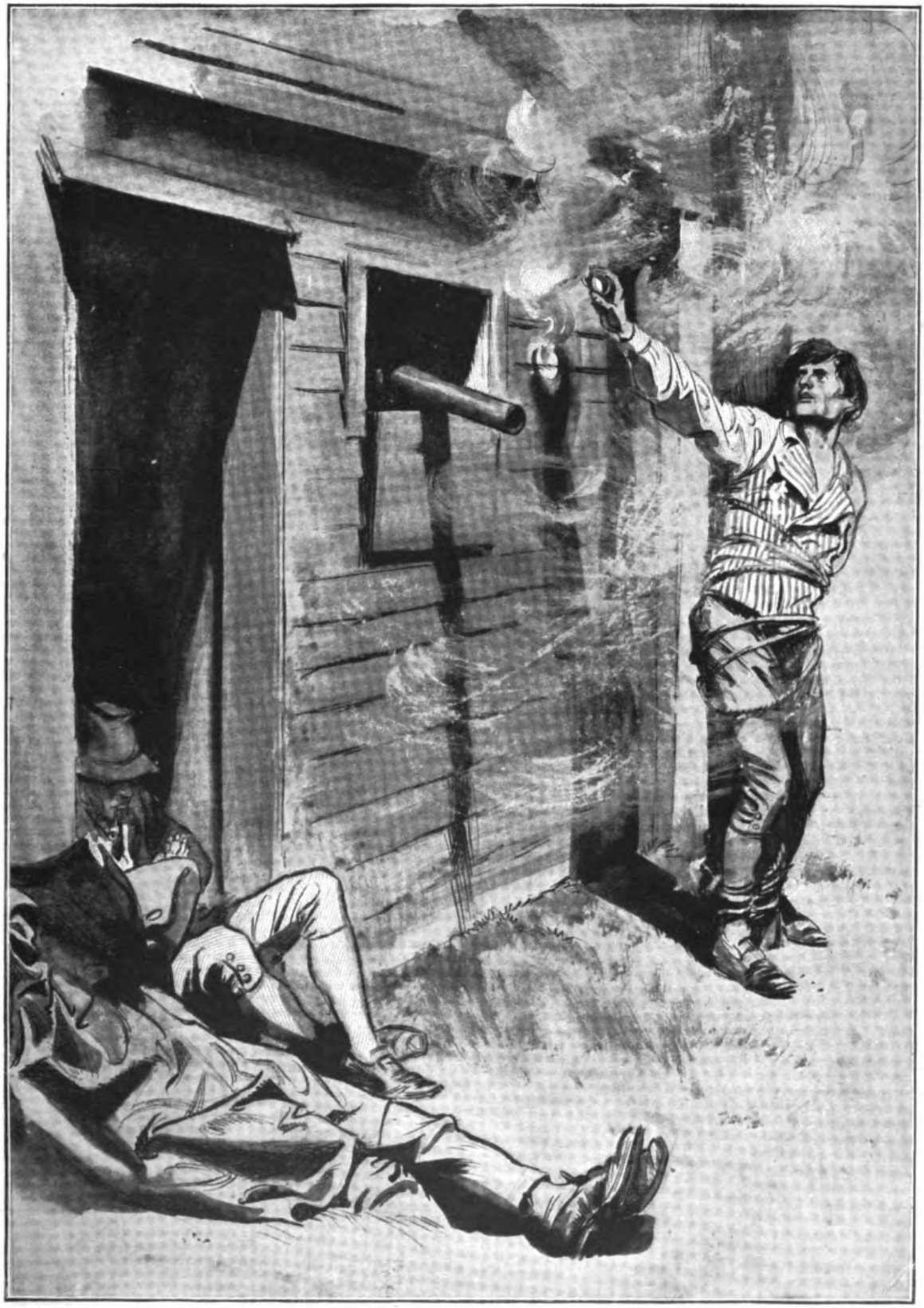
And now—would the plan succeed? Was it only a delusion, a false hope? He did not well know, even now.

Raising his arm stealthily, he held the circle of glass above his head, a few inches from the post, and waited. His eyes sought the sky, half dreading that a cloud might be floating there to baulk his purpose; but the sun blazed, undimmed and omnipotent. For minutes which seemed to him hours, Gasparin waited and watched, his muscles tense and strained, so that the upraised arm ached intolerably.

Yet this suspense did not in reality last long. Suddenly he became aware that a feather of smoke had fluttered from the wood, that a little charred circle was spreading beneath the radius of light thrown by the burning-glass, whilst a faint smell of scorching floated on the air. Gasparin moved the glass to another point, a few inches lower.

For weeks and months before this September afternoon there had been not a drop of rain. The whole country-side was baked and dry; there was no moisture in the wood of the signal-post exposed daily to the full heat of the sun. The flames had taken hold; it was alight in three places now. The fire crept upward, yet it still could have been extinguished easily if the Germans had been

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"STRETCHING HIS ARM TO THE UTMOST EXTENT, GASPARIN HELD THE BURNING-GLASS OVER THE PLANKS OF THE SIGNAL-HUT, AND SAW THE FIRE TAKE HOLD AND SPREAD WITH EVER-INCREASING RAPIDITY."



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awakened by the low crackling which sounded so loudly in Gasparin's ears.

Slowly little tongues of livid blue and fiery orange stole upwards, leaving a black, charred track in their wake. Stretching his arm to the utmost extent, Gasparin held the burning-glass over the planks of the signal-hut, and saw the fire take hold and spread with ever-increasing rapidity. The work was well begun —he could leave its consummation to the flames.

And now Gasparin allowed himself to think of escape—now, when each moment increased the imminent peril. With his free hand he tore at the cords, but they held fast, and he had no weapon with which to cut them away, neither could he reach the knots which secured them.

The helpless man struggled desperately, vainly; the thudding of the blood in his ears blended with the increasing roar of the flames as they climbed the pole above his head and spread, with an ever firmer hold, through the tinder-dry wood of the hut. Then suddenly, through that rising tumult, there broke a shout of anger and amazement.

"Here, Schneider, wake—wake! By all the fiends, what's the meaning of this?"

The two Germans were on their feet, their faces distorted by fury as they stared, dumb-founded, at the blazing signal-post. Cursing in their own language, shouting and gesticulating, they rushed into the smoke-filled hut to seek water. But the well which alone supplied the signalmen was a quarter of a mile away, and not one drop of fluid could they find. They dragged off their coats, and with them endeavoured to smother the flames, scrambling upon each other's shoulders against the wall of the hut. The planks, already ablaze, gave way beneath them, hurling both heavily to the ground, and still the flames rose, flinging themselves wide like a triumphal standard from the staff above Gasparin's head.

As for him, he forgot his peril, drunk with the fierce wine of success.

"Ah, you dogs of Prussians, how will you send your signals now?" he mocked them. "I have passed on my message first—a message which the other stations can plainly read, which will rouse the whole country-side!"

All his Southern blood afire, he laughed and flouted them until they were mad with rage. Gasparin had no wish to hide his complicity —nay, rather, he boasted and exulted, while the rising flames scorched his white face to crimson.

But a very black look crept over the coarse features of the man Felten.

"Aye, brag away!" he snarled. "We may have lost our opportunity, but you—your life."

And Gasparin, a chill creeping over him, realized that he was in the hands of foes utterly without pity.

With a curse the German snatched up the thick halliards which, burnt through aloft, had fallen in a tangle at the foot of the pole.

"Here, Schneider, help me!" he cried, and twisted the ropes with fierce roughness round Gasparin's body, lashing his freed right arm once more to the post.

Already the flames were very near, creeping down from above, bursting from the planks on either side. The Germans completed their work hastily and sprang back, shaking the sparks from their clothing.

"Mock us now, if you like!" jeered Felten, cruelly. "It seems to me, my fine fellow, that it is we who laugh last! And now, Schneider, we'd best be off; no use for us to wait here."

He bowed to Gasparin ironically, and the two men turned to go. Then, and not till then, their prisoner spoke. He knew well that he could not hope for mercy, and yet it was for mercy, of a kind, that he asked.

"For the love of Heaven," he gasped, "for the love of anything you hold dear, shoot me before you go!"

Again the German laughed. "You ask too much, my friend," he said. "No!"

They were gone, down the hill, away into the cool, shady woods, whilst Gasparin's strained, agonized eyes followed their retreating figures. Surely at the last they would feel some pity—would at least give him a swift death?

They were gone.

After all, he had succeeded; he had done his work well, had foiled the enemy's plans. But now Michel Gasparin had reached the dregs of his cup of success and found them very bitter.

The flames scorched him, a shower of sparks fell, setting his shirt ablaze, burning his flesh before the spurt died down. With a crash the heavy iron wheel over which the signal ropes ran fell from the centre of the transverse beam. It struck the roof of the hut close beside him, rebounding to the ground. If it had but come a little closer, it would have dealt him a merciful death.

A great jet of flame shot out from the wall beside him, and a faint hope came that perhaps the cords would be charred through, freeing him. But even as the hope was born it died; by the time those thick ropes were burnt away he would be past help.

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The martyrs his mother used to tell him of who died at the stake — they were very brave, those people; they sang psalms and hymns whilst the fire burnt their bodies. He, Gasparin, could not have sung—but then they were Christian martyrs.

All that he wished for was to die quickly, before pain made a coward of him. He would rather not shriek aloud, even if there was no one to hear him; yet, if this agony continued——

A cloud of thick smoke swept down upon him; he could not see the sun through the murk, yet it must be there. How else could the heat be so great? He was fighting for breath; his lungs seemed filled to suffocation.

Through the spark-flecked smoke Gasparin saw a figure—dimly, for his eyes streamed and smarted. Was it one of those angels whom his mother had described as coming to the rescue of the martyrs? It was not very likely that they would be sent to him. Yet —who was it?

Something like a living body pressed against him, and there came the cool touch of steel against his wrists. He felt how the strain of the cords against his body relaxed, knew vaguely that his arms were free. Then the ropes which bound his ankles gave way, but his legs had no strength to support him. He knew himself falling, falling, into what seemed infinite depths of flame.

Something cool and wet touched Gasparin's face. When he opened his burning eyes there was nothing but green branches overhead, very sweet and restful to look upon. He lay on the edge of the wood, it seemed; before him rose the little hill on which the signal station stood. Nothing was there now but a low heap of blackened, smoking ruins. The sight brought everything back to him, and he moved suddenly, falling back with a groan of pain. At the sound someone drew near; again there fell a cold touch on Gasparin's hot forehead. He lifted his eyes, and looked up into the face of Colette.

For a long time both were silent; then Gasparin spoke.

"Was it you, then—in the fire?"

"Yes."

"You—saved my life?"

"After sending you to your death, yes."

"Why did you come?"

"I have been here all the time, hiding at the edge of the wood. I saw everything that you did."

"Then why did you not warn your friends?"

"Because—— Oh, do you not understand?"

"You pitied me, I suppose?"

"Yes, I—pitied you." Something almost like a smile flickered over the girl's white face. "I could not come to your help until they were out of sight. And how I feared that it might be too late!"

"You entice me from my post, you plan to betray me, and then—save my life! Oh, I do not understand you!"

"No? Yet it is all very simple. I tried to keep you away from the signal station, and, as I hoped, from danger. I came to your rescue afterwards. I did it all, for the same reason."

"What is that reason?"

"Because—I love you."

"You—love—me?" Gasparin dragged himself up until he leant upon his elbow—spoke roughly, fiercely. "Is this true, or are you only fooling me again to serve your cause?"

And she answered him very quietly:—

"I love you better than any cause—better than anything on this earth. Perhaps it is shameful to say it, yet I feel no shame, Michel."

Gasparin sank back upon the turf. He spoke again, his eyes upon her face.

"I thought that it was an angel who came to me through the fire."

"And it was only — me. You were quite wrong." The girl's smile was very piteous.

"No, I do not think that I was wrong," said Michel Gasparin, slowly.

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# FURS

## And the Animals That Produce Them.

By R. I. POCOCK, F.R.S.,
Superintendent of the Zoological Society's Gardens, London.

Photographs by F. W. Bond.

THE demand for furs created during recent years by the fashionable status they have attained has been twofold. It has led to an immense increase in the numbers of fur-bearing animals sacrificed annually for feminine wear, and to the introduction of a cohort of species whose pelts no one would formerly have dreamt of importing for that object. Many of these animals have no claim whatever to be called "fur-bearers." They belong to species adapted to tropical conditions, with short, hairy coats neither warm nor durable, and with nothing particular to recommend them except their contrasted patterns of spots or stripes, which appeal to the barbaric taste of the age in the matter of woman's attire.

Every winter season adds fresh species to the category, so that a walk down one of the fashionable thoroughfares of London frequented by the "quality" during the hours of parade is quite a pleasant recreation to the naturalist, if for the time being he can forget the wholesale destruction and its certain issue attested by what he sees. It must lead eventually either to the extinction of the persecuted species or to the reduction of their representative individuals to a number so inconsiderable that the generation succeeding ours may never have the chance of seeing them alive. That this is no vain conclusion is shown by the fate that has befallen the sea-otter, a species of outstanding interest which, for want of timely protection, was indiscriminately slaughtered by the fur-hunters, with the result that it is now quite unprocurable by the Zoological Societies of Europe and America.

It is, however, no part of my present purpose to put in a plea for the passing of measures for the protection of these animals, pressing though the need of legislative action in the matter may be. I propose to show what manner of animals they are which are imported by the fur trade and are known to the majority of wearers by their skins alone, or by the often misleading, unintelligible, or erroneous names applied to them by the salesmen.

For convenience of description, natural furs, as opposed to imitation furs, whose name is legion, may be sorted into two categories—to wit, those of aquatic and those of terrestrial animals. The hair of the majority of animals consists of two portions or layers—a soft, woolly under fur, and an outer coating of comparatively coarse hair overlying it. In most of the made-up furs of land animals, the hair and under fur are left untouched, apart from dyeing; but fur-bearing aquatic or water animals are peculiar in that the under fur is very dense and short and soft, and is sharply differentiated from the long hairs of the coat. These are nearly always removed by the process called "pulling," so that the dressed skin, covered with under fur, looks quite unlike that of the living or stuffed animal, upon which only the outer coating of coarse hair is visible.

The effects of this dressing process are well illustrated by seal-skins, which when made up into jackets and cloaks are of surpassing softness and gloss, but show no resemblance, either tactile or visual, to the smooth, hairy coat of the animal when alive. And let me here explain that, of the large number of existing species of seals, only some half-dozen or so carry under fur of the kind that is traded as "seal-skin," and these all belong to the group commonly called sea-lions. Some live in the northern, some in the southern oceans, the one that yields the greatest number of skins being an inhabitant of Bering Sea up by Alaska. Of the three sea-lions now exhibited in the Zoological Gardens, one only—namely, the small specimen

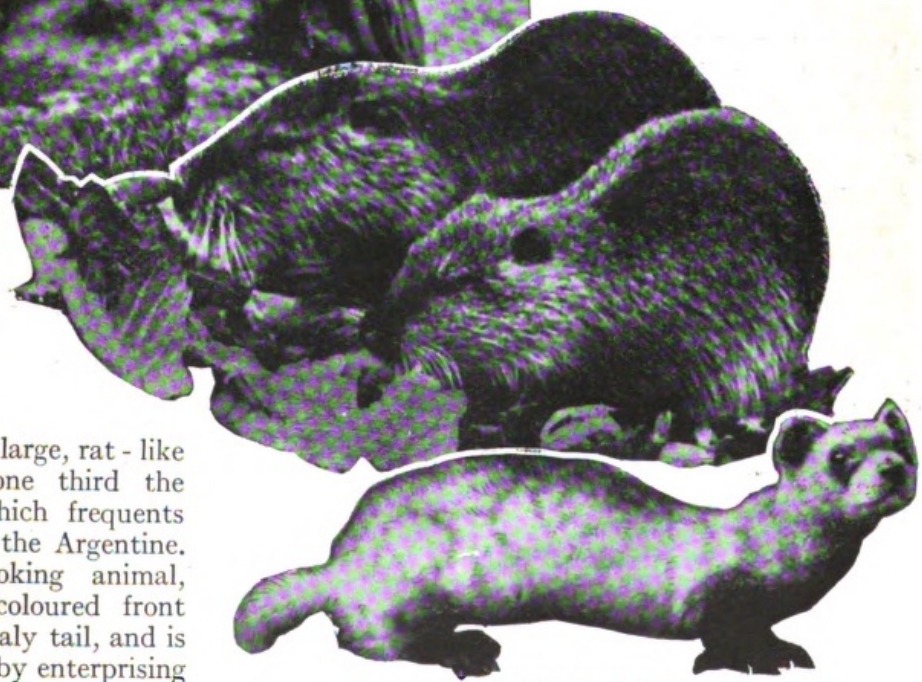
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from the Cape—is a fur-seal (No. 1); the others, from California, are not. Yet there is no external difference in the matter of coat-texture between them.

Seal is the costliest and the most beautiful of the furs prepared by "pulling." Next comes beaver, and after beaver, and a good imitation of it, nutria. The beaver is a well-known animal; but nutria-fur is derived from the species known to naturalists as the coypu or beaver-rat (No. 2), a large, rat-like creature about one third the size of a beaver, which frequents lakes and streams in the Argentine. It is an ugly-looking animal, with huge, orange-coloured front teeth and a thick, scaly tail, and is sometimes exhibited by enterprising showmen at country fairs as a sample of what the London drains can develop in the way of sewer-rats!



1.—**THE CAPE FUR-SEAL.**
ONLY FROM HALF-A-DOZEN OR SO OF THE MANY SPECIES OF SEAL IS THE FUR KNOWN AS "SEAL-SKIN" OBTAINED. THE CAPE FUR-SEAL IS ONE OF THEM.



2.—**THE COYPU OR BEAVER-RAT,**
FROM WHICH WE DERIVE THE FUR KNOWN AS "NUTRIA."



3.—**BLACK-FOOTED POLE-CAT.**
THE MADE-UP SKINS OF THIS ANIMAL ARE SOLD AS "NATURAL FITCH."

Another aquatic member of the rat tribe is the musquash, or musk-rat, of North America. Furs of this animal are sometimes pulled, but are more often made up entire, being beautifully soft and of a rich brown tint, something like sable. They may very commonly be seen fashioned into jackets and cloaks, and can be identified as a rule by the dark brown tint of the middle and the paler brown tint of the sides of each of the component skins. Dyed musquash is often sold as "mink or sable musquash," and when pulled and dyed as "seal-musquash." Similarly nutria, pulled and dyed, is called "seal-nutria," and otter—the last of the aquatic species demanding notice—is sold as "seal-otter" when similarly treated.

Land animals with the under fur loose in texture and irregular in length may be described in detail according to their natural affinities; and since the greatest number and the most important belong to the weasel family, these may be considered first.

Formerly the commonest fur yielded by this tribe was ermine, time-honoured by its heraldic and regal associations. Ermine is the name applied to the white winter coat of the species known in England as the stoat. But singularly enough the tip of the tail remains black throughout the year; and the black spots

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relieving the dead whiteness of the made-up skins are the tail-tips inserted at regular intervals.

Closely akin to the stoats, though the kinship is hardly suggested by the dressed skins, are the species known to naturalists as mink and pole-cat, the trade name for the latter being the old English term "fitch," meaning the "evil-scented one." Perhaps to my readers this animal will be familiar as the ferret, which is merely the tame albino variety, used for bolting rabbits and rats. A mink is nothing but a pole-cat of semi-aquatic habits, with a thicker under fur to keep out the water. Its furs have been fashionable and expensive for a long time. Fitch fur, on the contrary, which is of rather a poorer quality, has only become common within the last few years. There are two well-marked varieties of it. The more beautiful of the two comes from a North American species, the black-footed pole-cat (No. 3), which is creamy yellow, sprinkled with black. Made-up skins of this species are sold as "natural fitch" to distinguish them from those of the common fitch, which are generally dyed. The finest skins of this pole-cat, now nearly extinct in Great Britain, are procured from the colder parts of Russia and Siberia.

Appropriately-dyed skins of mink and common fitch are traded under the names of sable mink and sable fitch respectively, because they are not easy to distinguish by eye from those of a second group of the weasel family typified by the martens and sables. These are the most abundant of the better-class furs on the market at the present time, and have long been prized for the softness of their texture and the becoming sobriety of their tints. Marten skins excelling in these qualities are dignified by the name of sable, and of these the Russian or Siberian and Canadian varieties command the highest prices. One species, known to English naturalists as the pine marten, and to the trade as the Baum marten (No. 4), was formerly abundant in the United Kingdom, and still lingers, though verging on extinction, in a few mountainous districts in England and Ireland. It is found nearly all over Europe, and specimens from the colder districts of the Russian Empire appear to blend with the true sable and with the variety of it known from its locality as Kolinsky.



4.—PINE OR BAUM MARTEN.
MARTEN SKINS OF THE FINEST QUALITY ARE DIGNIFIED BY THE NAME OF "SABLE."

In Southern and Central Europe it is overlapped by a second species, not a British animal, called the beech, stone, or stein marten, which produces on the average a poorer fur than its ally, although dressed skins of the two are not always distinguishable.

No one would suspect the bear-like wolverine (No. 5), with its short, massive body, thick legs, and clumsy gait, of being first cousin to the graceful, active sable. That, nevertheless, is its zoological position. The dark brown, somewhat coarse, but withal luxuriant fur is also bear-like, and the skins are usually made up into rugs. The wolverine is the greatest foe the trapper has to deal with, from its habit of following up a line of sable traps and eating the snared animals, which it could never capture by its own unaided efforts.

Still more ursine than the wolverine is the badger we all know so well. Northern badgers grow beautiful furs, and many of the Chinese and Japanese species, closely akin to our own

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familiar "brock," are annually slaughtered. But the North American animal (No. 6), distinguishable by its quaintly-banded face, is the greatest sufferer. It yields a thick pale fur, varied with hairs of hoary grey.

Of skunks there are two well-defined species on the market. The one sold under that name is typically black and white, the white being arranged in a pair of broad bands passing backwards from the neck on either side of the body (No. 7). Black skunks, which are more fashionable than black and white ones, sometimes occur as natural "sports," but most of the uniformly coloured skins made into furs are dyed black.

The other species of skunk, called the little skunk by naturalists, is a much smaller animal (No. 8). Its furs, which have only become fashionable during the last handful of years, and are traded as "civet-cat," are black, ornamented with sharply-defined white stripes, four of which on each individual skin are set at right angles to the rest, a style of pattern quite distinctive of the species.

Now and again one may see skins of a few of the smaller sorts of civet-cats, known as genets, worn as muffs and stoles, but the numbers at present in use do not call for more than a passing reference to the fact. The same applies to several of the smaller species of the cat tribe, like the African serval and the Chinese leopard-cat, which are occasionally worn for their decorative effect. But, unlike the civets, some representatives of the cat family are hardy enough to withstand the rigours of subarctic conditions, and produce splendid furs. The lynx, which with its local varieties ranges through Europe, Asia, and North America, is a case in point. Most lynxes show a pattern of pale brown spots on a creamy ochre ground, but the finest furs of this bob-tailed cat are yielded by the Canadian variety, in which the spots are obliterated, at all events in the winter coat. The less luxuriant furs of American lynxes are traded as "wild cats."

The skins of the larger species of cats, like tigers and leopards, are well known; but those of the much rarer snow-leopard or ounce (No. 9), a native of the highlands of Central Asia, often puzzle the uninformed. Skins of this beautiful animal, thickly furred, grey in colour, and ornamented with large, ring-like spots, are sometimes worn as cloaks or jackets, like those of the showy African or Indian leopard, but for that purpose they look more suitable for Kaffir chieftains than for modern Caucasian women.

Only one other species of this family calls for notice, and that is the common household cat. It is an open secret that the skins of this animal are dyed and made up into imitation furs of various kinds, but it will come as a surprise to most people to be told that skins of the common striped tabby, the type most despised by cat-fanciers, have been recently displayed in the shop-windows in the most unblushing manner, made up into muffs, stoles, and collars. Presumably the "wild" look about the pattern of this cat deludes the uninitiated into the belief that the skins are those of some rare exotic species. I am not acquainted with the name under which such furs are



5.—**THE WOLVERINE,**
WHOSE SKINS ARE USUALLY MADE UP INTO RUGS.

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sold, nor with the price that is asked for them. Skins of all the northern species of bears are imported in great numbers; and dyed racoon is sometimes sold as "Alaska bear"; but the soft, thick, brownish furs of this animal, with the ringed and bushy tails attached, are generally sold unaltered for rugs. The 'coon is the only member of its family hitherto put on the market; but there is one species far surpassing it in beauty of colour, if a little inferior in texture of fur, which the trade has not yet got hold of. Wild horses, however, shall not drag from me its name and native land.

The display of foxes, in almost endless varieties, has been, perhaps, the most startling feature in the fur boom during the past decade. Most of the skins belong to our common northern species; the costly silver or silver-tipped fox-furs being nothing but varieties of the ordinary red fox of America. Quite black foxes are rare in Nature, and almost all of those sold as furs have been dyed that tint. Such skins are very commonly converted into imitation "silver" or "pointed fox" by sticking white hairs here and there in the pelage. There is no special beauty about the silver tip, and not one woman in fifty can wear red fox next her face and hair and look tastefully dressed, so killing is the colour—but *de gustibus non disputandum*, especially where feminine costume is concerned.

Next in importance to the varieties of the red fox is the little Arctic fox (No 10), which is worn in two phases, the white and the "blue." The blue phase, so-called, the real colour being slaty-brown, is not, as sometimes stated, the summer coat of the white fox, since both are trapped in winter. It is merely a dusky variety which does not undergo any marked seasonal colour change, like the typical form. Skins of a few more species of foxes are worn, the commonest being those of the Virginian or "grey" fox, which is blackish grey and buff in colour. A more beautiful kind, the kit fox, also an American animal, may be distinguished from the last by its more woolly fur, paler back, and white underside. But several species of fox seem to pass under the name of "kit."

The last member of the dog-tribe claiming attention is the wolf, the skins of which on account of their size and the coarseness of their hair are usually turned into rugs. The species yielding the majority of skins is the so-called North American timber



6.—**THE AMERICAN BADGER,**
DISTINGUISHED BY ITS CURIOUSLY-BANDED FACE, WHOSE BEAUTIFUL FUR IS SO MUCH IN DEMAND.



7.—**CANADIAN SKUNK,**
WHOSE BLACK AND WHITE FUR IS VERY POPULAR.

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**8.—THE LITTLE SKUNK,**
WHOSE FUR, KNOWN AS "CIVET-CAT," HAS ONLY BECOME FASHIONABLE DURING THE PAST FEW YEARS.

**9.—SNOW-LEOPARD OR OUNCE.**
SKINS OF THIS BEAUTIFUL ANIMAL ARE SOMETIMES WORN AS CLOAKS OR JACKETS.

wolf, which is sometimes traded under the name of " Kamchatka fox."

Of the terrestrial species of rodents, three are exceedingly common—the grey squirrel, the hamster, and the white hare. The grey squirrel, which during the past few years has become familiarized by the specimens running wild in Regent's Park and the Zoological Gardens, is a North American species. The hamster, on the other hand, inhabits continental Europe, where in appropriate localities it forms extensive underground burrows, like rabbit-warrens. It is about the size of a rat, and is remarkable for being more brightly and attractively coloured below than above. The skins, therefore, are always slit down the middle line of the back and, being spread out with the tortoise-shell underside exposed, are puzzling to identify unless the method in which they are stripped off is known. Skins of the grey squirrel are also frequently stripped in this way.

White hare is the winter coat of several different kinds of Arctic species or varieties which assume that tint during the cold weather and revert to the ordinary brown tint in the summer. The furs of white hares are in appearance a passable substitute for white fox, and are commonly sold as "imitation" or "mock" fox. Similarly furs of the marmot, a large kind of ground squirrel living in Canada and Central Asia, are usually dyed and put on the market as "sable," "mink," or "skunk" marmot.

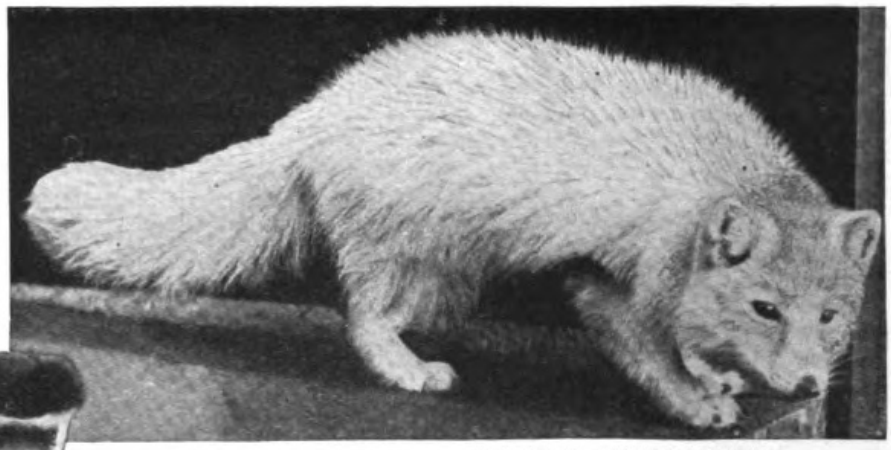
The most exquisite and costly furs of this group of animals are, however, those of the rabbit-like chinchilla, which, on account of its scarcity and high price, only a few are privileged to wear. The colour is silvery grey, and the softest and thickest furs are produced by specimens living at tolerably high altitudes



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in the Chilian Andes, those from lower levels being much less valuable.

Monkeys are as yet practically untouched by the trade, probably because their coats are adapted to tropical conditions, and the fur is consequently of poor quality. Skins of one long-haired species, however, are exported in some numbers from East Africa, and are generally made up into muffs. The colour of this monkey (No. 11) is quite exceptionally beautiful. It is jet black and white, and the two tints are sharply contrasted, exactly as in the case of black and white skunk. The monkey itself is known to animal-dealers as the "bishop," in allusion to the biretta-like growth of the hair on the crown of the head and to the cassock and surplice-like pattern of the pelage.



10.—**THE ARCTIC FOX.**
THE VOGUE FOR FOX HAS BEEN, PERHAPS, THE MOST STARTLING FEATURE IN THE FUR BOOM DURING RECENT YEARS.

One is a forbidding-looking American beast of carnivorous habits (No. 12), the other a harmless vegetable feeder, more nearly akin to the kangaroo, and coming from Australia. Incredible quantities of skins of the latter, which has a short, soft, woolly fur, are annually exported. It is consequently a cheap fur and is made up in various ways, one of the most singular of its trade names being "Adelaide chinchilla." Wallabies are nothing but small kangaroos, and their furs are very like those of Australian opossums in texture and colour. They are sometimes sold as



11.—**LONG-HAIRED MONKEY,**
WHOSE BEAUTIFUL BLACK AND WHITE FUR IS GENERALLY MADE UP INTO MUFFS.

12.—**AMERICAN OPOSSUM,**
WHOSE FUR IS KNOWN AS "BEAVER OPOSSUM."

Furs of several species of marsupials or pouch-bearing animals are imported—namely, kangaroos, wallabies, and opossums. Of opossums there are two very distinct kinds.

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"skunk-wallaby," and, oddly enough, as "Finland lynx." The only Australian animal which yields a really rich and costly fur is the koala, now very scarce, and better known as the native bear. The American opossum just referred to has fur of a very different texture from that of the Australian animal. It resembles somewhat, indeed, the furs of aquatic animals, in consisting of a whitish, close, soft under fur, covered with long, coarse, black and grey hairs. When these hairs are sheared and the under fur dyed the skins are traded as "beaver opossum."

In the foregoing description of the animals that supply most of the furs on the market, the trade names, where they differ from those employed by naturalists, have in many instances been given. But no account of this subject would be complete without further reference to the host of imitation furs that are sold. Apart from their deceptive appearance, there is nothing fraudulent about these faked skins, since the names under which they are traded are mostly sanctioned by the London Chamber of Commerce.

Combed skins of white lambs from Central Asia are called "Iceland fox." Caracul fur comes from kids. Dyed goat is called "bear goat," and dyed hare "sable hare" or "fox hare." Calf-skins pass as "Siberian pony." Finally, rabbits, wild and tame, of various colours, generally dyed, and often sheared or prepared in other ways, are traded under a number of curious titles, such as sable coney, chinchilla coney, seal or musquash coney, electric, inland, or coast seal, mock or French ermine, and—perhaps strangest of all—Baltic lynx.

Many, too, are the devices, apart from dyeing and clipping, adopted for disguising the identity of cheap furs. Imitation heads of foxes or fitch, with beads for eyes and a piece of black wood for a nose, are shaped on the skins of rabbits or cats, and pieces of cats' tails are attached to all manner of furs to give them a fictitious resemblance to sable. Yet so little do the wearers know of natural history that they accept these impossible combinations as unaltered skins of genuine wild animals.

I subjoin side by side for comparison lists of the numbers of some of the principal furs offered for disposal by some of the London auctioneers at their autumn sales in 1912 and 1913. These statistics, and those that follow, have been extracted from the *Fur News Magazine* for 1913. In the enumeration, however, I have for the sake of simplicity neglected the hundreds, so that the totals are in all cases less than the original figures:—

(At three houses.)

| | 1912. | 1913. |
|---|---|---|
| Martens and sables ..... | 6,000 | 14,000 |
| Ermine ..... | 11,000 | 64,000 |
| Mink ..... | 7,000 | 18,000 |
| Skunk ..... | 24,000 | 154,000 |
| Foxes (all kinds) ..... | 20,000 | 135,000 |
| Racoon ..... | 15,000 | 91,000 |
| Opossum (American).... | 58,000 | 138,000 |
| Musquash ..... | 600,000 | 1,257,000 |

(At two houses.)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Little skunk (civet cat) . | 32,000 | 41,000 |
| Lynx and wild cat ..... | 5,000 | 16,000 |

(At one house.)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Opossum (Australian) .. | 70,000 | 76,000 |
| Wallaby ..... | 165,000 | 260,000 |

These figures, however, do not by any means represent the total numbers of skins of the species mentioned sold at the autumn auctions in London. To convey an idea of this, I have selected four of the species, and have added to their totals given above in the 1913 column the numbers of their furs sold by some other firms in London at approximately the same time last year:—

| | |
|---|---|
| Martens (at seven houses) ..... | 61,000 |
| Mink (at six houses) ..... | 145,000 |
| Foxes (at seven houses) ..... | 150,000 |
| Racoon (at four houses) ..... | 133,000 |

Finally, the following figures show the quantities of North American skins sold in the United States in 1912 and 1913:—

| | 1912. | 1913. |
|---|---|---|
| Martens ..... | 31,000 | 35,000 |
| Ermine ..... | 297,000 | 319,000 |
| Mink ..... | 120,000 | 149,000 |
| Skunk ..... | 1,483,000 | 1,627,000 |
| Little skunk..... | 287,000 | 153,000 |
| Foxes ..... | 170,000 | 253 000 |
| Racoon..... | 311,000 | 477,000 |
| Opossum ..... | 1,286,000 | 1,319,000 |
| Musquash..... | 3,987,000 | 6,205,000 |
| Lynx and wild cat..... | 40,000 | 52,000 |
| Badger ..... | 31,000 | 23,000 |

These figures speak for themselves. In all cases, with two exceptions, where comparisons are given between 1912 and 1913, there is an increase, often a prodigious increase, in the number of skins sold in the latter year. And it must be remembered that although London is no doubt the greatest centre on this side of the Atlantic for the distribution of furs, we are dealing, in the case of the first two tables, with only some of the principal firms in one of the capitals of Europe, and also that the third table takes no account of the immense quantities of martens, sables, ermines, minks, and lynxes exported mainly by way of China and Japan from Central Asia.

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# THE HUSBAND

By MARIE LOUISE VAN SAANEN

ILLUSTRATED BY BALFOUR KER

THAT morning she decided to go shopping. A variety of feminine trifles in her wardrobe must be replenished, and she was in a periodical state common to most women, where she felt the actual need of spending money. When her husband had finished reading his letters, she leaned forward.

"Herbie, dear, may I have a little money? I need a few things."

He became at once conscious of her.

"Certainly, Babes; how much?"

"As much as you can spare," she said, quickly.

He pulled out a leather wallet, and handed her from it a five-dollar bill.

"Will that do?"

Her pretty, rather weak face showed disappointment and some petulance.

"Well, if that's all you can give me, I suppose it will *have* to do. But I haven't been shopping for ever so long, Herbert."

"Want to buy a motor-car?" he joked, and handed her another dollar.

He consulted his watch, and rose slowly. He was a short, square man, not good-looking.

"I must trot along, Esther. Be good," he said.

"You're a slave to that office, Herbie," she pouted, following him out to the hall.

He lingered a moment to light his cigar.

"Oh, now that Jenkins is away, I've got to be there. Good-bye, Babes."

She closed the door after him and walked back to the dining-room. She was thinking that although Jenkins was the older man, and had taken Herbert with his small capital in partnership, because the two men had been friends in the same society at Yale, Jenkins after all had done a clever thing. For Herbert Rogers was always working and Laurence Jenkins was always taking holidays. Just now he had gone on a trip round the world.

The Rogerses lived on the top floor of a ten-storey new apartment house in West Seventy-third Street, near the river. Esther often wondered if they would ever live anywhere else. Yet her girlhood dream had been to live in New York. Now that the dream was realized, all she had learned from its fulfilment was discontent. Staring out of the window at the grey late autumn sky-line, cut and jagged by uneven slices of grim roof edges, she did not reason or analyse this discontent, although she felt it vaguely.

Early in the afternoon she dressed to go out. Once in the street, she became a busy and important little person, who, hugging her black fox fur tighter around her long, thin neck, pursing her lips a trifle, hurried because everyone about her hurried.

When she came to Arnold's stores she hesitated, then went in and wandered about,

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hovering with ruminating frowns over things not included in her shopping list.

Esther found pleasure in feeling herself one of the elbowing crowd, and had she not at last bumped directly against the veil counter and remembered that she needed a veil, she could easily have spent the whole afternoon in purposeless contemplation of the season's novelties. There were some charming lace veils. She fingered them tentatively, knowing that they were too expensive.

Suddenly from behind her someone exclaimed, "Esther—Esther Merrick! Why, it can't be! Yes, it is."

"Oh, really! How exciting!"

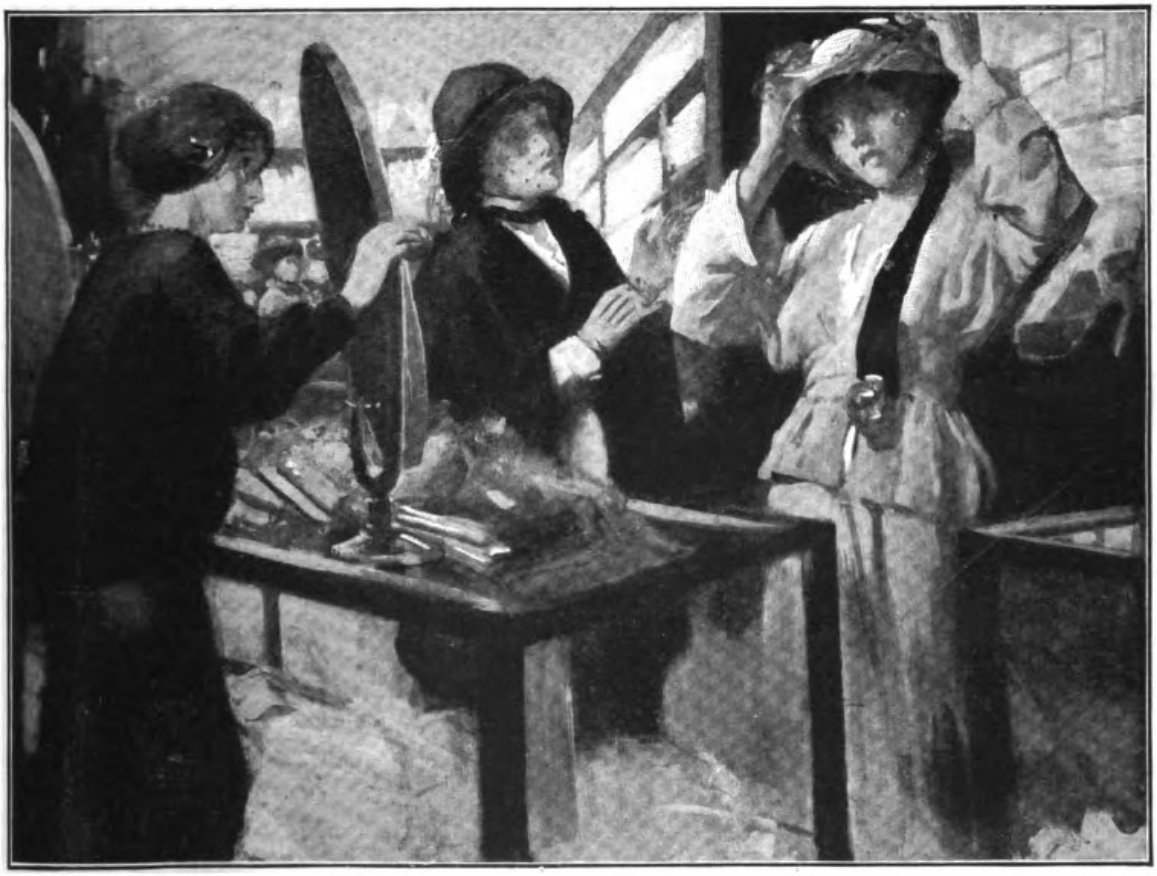
There was a quick, flattering accent of recognition in Esther's voice. Mrs. Cecil Lambert was one of the names she had often seen in the society columns of the papers.

"Oh, what a lot we've got to talk about!" cried Janet Lambert. "Do let's stay together the rest of the afternoon."

"I'd love to," murmured Esther, feeling elated. "But I must have a veil, Janet. My, how *smart* you are!"

Janet looked pleased.

"Do you think so? In these old things?



"'IT REALLY IS BECOMING,' SHE SIGHED."

Looking up, much surprised at hearing her maiden name, she saw an exquisitely-gowned young woman smiling at her.

"Don't you remember me at Miss Scholly's school?" said the young woman.

Then in turn Esther cried, "Janet Morrison! Well, of all the funny things!"

The two women fell effusively into one another's arms.

"It's been years. Why, Janet Morrison! How small the world is!"

"I'm married—did you know it? Five years, my dear. I'm Mrs. Cecil Lambert now."

Do hurry! Here, I'll help you choose. Here's a pretty veil."

She picked up the lace veil which only a moment before Esther had been fingering longingly.

"Yes, it's lovely," she agreed now. "But it's rather expensive."

"Oh, no, it isn't, my dear, when you think what it *is*. Besides, charge it up. Things always seem less expensive that way."

"I have no charge account," admitted Esther.

Her friend stared at her.

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"Oh, my dear! How do you shop, then? Here, I'll arrange it for you. You *must* have an account. Rita, this lady's my friend. She wants to open an account."

Before Esther realized the import of her final weak assent the matter was settled, her husband's business and address given, and the obliging Rita had pinned on the veil.

"It really *is* becoming," she sighed, and from that moment she surrendered to Janet Lambert's management. It seemed all at once the most natural thing in the world to have charged the new veil, and to have the money, which should have paid for it, still in her purse.

"I can pay just as well at the end of the month with the house money," she thought, calculating rapidly how she could reduce the house expenses.

When at last the two friends emerged from the shop, she followed Janet rather timidly, impressed by the latter's careless, "Oh, the motor ought to be here somewhere."

She did not know exactly what was the correct thing for her to do—whether she should not then take leave of her friend. But she could not bear the thought of trudging off alone and relinquishing this, her first glimpse of real luxury. Then a brilliant inspiration occurred to her.

As they reached the car, she turned to her friend.

"Do have tea with me somewhere, Janet."

"Let me see—this is Tuesday. It's Mrs. Leggett's day. Bother, I won't go. Yes, I'd love to have tea with you, dear. We'll go to the Ritz, shall we?"

So what Esther had most desired, from the moment she saw the car, came true. She rode in it beside her friend, Mrs. Cecil Lambert, who knew everyone worth knowing in New York. Sunk back against the tan-coloured cushion, she sought to imitate the languid ease of women she had often seen driving in their own cars.

The Ritz Hotel was brilliant at this tea hour. There was affluence of colour and sound, a dissolving of groups one into the other, the drift and sway of feathers and aigrettes. There were women dressed in blue and in purple and in brown; all the women wore furs, thrown back from their shoulders.

Esther trailed after her friend, whose progress to a small corner table was punctuated by graded smiles. She appeared to know many people. Once seated and tea ordered, she gazed over Esther's head at tables beyond; her eyes grew vague and roving, her voice and smile distant.

"Why, there's Addie White with old Mrs. van Kloow. They say Addie's husband is drinking hard. Addie's very sweet, but she ought to do something about her husband."

"Perhaps she can't," suggested Esther.

"Women can always manage their husbands, my dear, if they're clever."

Janet consulted a bracelet watch.

"I think I'd better drop in at Mrs. Leggett's after all. I didn't go last Tuesday, I've just remembered. Do you mind? I'm going to take you there some day soon. She gives a wonderful ball every season."

"Of course I don't mind," declared Esther. But she did mind, and as she paid for the tea she thought it was very expensive for the little while they had been there and the little they had ordered.

At the entrance of the hotel they parted affectionately. Janet invited her friend to lunch the following week, waved three fingers daintily, and tripped off into her beautiful shining machine.

The flat seemed cramped and close on Esther's return. All the evening she talked of nothing else to her husband but Janet Lambert and Janet's motor-car and Janet's friends.

"She's going to introduce us to people, Herbie, dear," she told him.

Her husband seemed delighted. "Now you have a friend, Babes. I'm mighty glad. I know who Lambert is. The old man, his father, left him a nice little fortune."

"I wish your father had been rich." She came and knelt near him, brushing his paper to the floor. "Some day we'll be rich, anyhow, won't we, darling?" she coaxed.

He closed his eyes and she stroked his hair. "Would you care so much about it?" he murmured, sleepily.

"Oh, yes!" she said, and snuggled closer to him, with the gesture, eternal in its suggestion, the gesture of woman who, when softest in her approach, is always demanding more of some heart's desire.

Janet Lambert kept her promise. She introduced Esther to her world. It was easier than Esther had imagined, to know people, the *right* people. She soon found herself in an inextricable tangle of engagements and social obligations, which she welcomed proudly as evidences of well-deserved success.

She learned to play bridge, and, playing badly, lost money. She gave little teas, where too many women and a few idle young

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men crowded into her small flat, patronizing her as they would a new fad. These teas meant cakes, cigarettes, and the purchase of a bridge-table.

In short, unknown to her husband, she launched into thoughtlessly extravagant vanities and spent a great deal of money, running up bills for things for which she could not pay, and paying for others from her modest allowance.

To do Janet justice, it never occurred to her, when she encouraged Esther in her extravagant tastes, that Esther's husband might not be able to pay in the end. All husbands did.

As for Esther, vouched for by her careless young guide, she opened accounts wherever it pleased her or was convenient to do so. She did not tell her husband of these accounts. She lived from day to day, casting aside sense of responsibility, postponing explanations which might be disturbing, refusing to realize any difference between herself and her friend and her friend's world.

The tradespeople, in the beginning, were deferential and willing to wait. This gave her a false sense of security. She never even opened all the bills which came in that first month.

But when the second month came to an end, there arrived an accumulated mass of bills with important additions to them, and other new bills. The hitherto patient tradespeople grew suspicious at the delay in paying them, and began to press their claims.

Perhaps, if Esther's husband then had seemed more conscious of her existence, she might have confessed the stress of her situation. Stone, a man whom she did not like, had been telephoning and writing often lately. Not naturally observant, she could not help noticing that whenever word came from Stone her husband became more absent-minded. Like most women, who postpone until the last moment facing unpleasant things, she clung now to the hope that perhaps her husband might be making some extra money, and she reasoned that until she was sure of the exact state of affairs with him she had better not worry him about bills.

She began to realize the disagreeable necessity of telling her husband the truth when, one afternoon, she met Jimmy Stone at a tea. She was surprised to find him there. The hostess was exclusive, and did not ask people easily to her house. Janet herself had needed much diplomacy in order to introduce Esther to this house.

Jimmy Stone was standing near the tea-table. As soon as he saw Esther he came over to her, smilingly.

"Is that husband of yours here, Mrs. Rogers?" he asked.

"He never goes to teas," she answered, coldly.

"Your husband and I are great friends," he said, still smiling. Her glance swept past him to the nibbling, chattering throng gathered in groups of rustle and gossip around the tea-table.

"Yes, we're great chums," he continued, not seeming to notice her abstraction. Then with a sudden confidential lowering of his voice, "You ought to like me a little, Mrs. Rogers. If your husband will listen to me you'll have your own motor-car before long."

"What do you mean?" She vouchsafed him a second of attention.

"Just between you and me and the lamp-post," he went on. "I've been talking to your husband lately about a certain proposition that's the chance of a lifetime, but he's full of objections."

She showed sudden interest.

"Will he be in this evening, Mrs. Rogers, if I come round? I haven't had time to see him to-day."

"Yes, he will," she said.

He bowed over her hand.

"All right. I'll come, then. Thank you for letting me."

When she arrived home her husband was seated at his desk, writing a letter. She tip-toed across the room and, looking over his shoulder, read, "Dear old Jenk, I ve cabled you——"

Then, aware of her presence, he whirled around and shuffled the closely-written sheets under his blotting-pad.

"I saw your friend Stone this afternoon," she began at once. "He's coming in to-night."

"The devil!" he exclaimed. "What did he tell you?" he continued, with sudden sharpness.

"Only that you could make money if you'd listen to him," she replied.

"Stone had better keep his mouth shut," said her husband.

"He said you might make lots of money, Herbert."

"Yes, but to make it I should have to have it."

He moved his arm impatiently, and a paper which he had evidently forgotten to put away slid to the floor and lay face upwards. She

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bent to pick it up, looking at it curiously as she did so.

"Why, Herbert, what's this?"

He snatched it from her.

"Give it to me, Esther. I wish you'd leave my things alone."

"Don't snap at me so, Herbert. I wouldn't have cared about your old paper, but now that you're so disagreeable about it I want to know, and I've *got* to know. What is it?"

"Oh, you women!" he growled. "If I tell you, will you leave me alone? It's a list of securities belonging to Jenkins. I'm to send him the payments on them that'll be due next spring."

"Are they worth much?" she persisted.

"About seventy-five thousand dollars."

"Oh!"

She picked up her gloves and hat and went out of the room slowly.

After dinner Stone arrived. Soon she left the two men alone, on pretext of fetching them some whisky and soda. When the tray was ready, she sat down beside it and waited, listening idly to the tick of the dining-room clock. Finally she decided that the men had talked alone long enough. The sitting-room door was shut. Pausing before it a moment, she heard Stone's voice.

"If you can raise money for that first payment, I'll guarantee we can sell at our own price."

"Who's going to lend me that much?" said her husband. "Especially when I've no security to give, nothing to sell or to show except my word."

"Your word's good," said Stone. "Anyway, it's up to you. I wouldn't have come to everybody with this proposition, I can tell you."

"I wish Jenkins were here," said her husband at last.

"Could you borrow from him?"

"Well, I don't know."

There was the scrape of a match. Someone's cigar had evidently gone out.

"We've no time to spare," said Stone then, briskly. "It's got to be put through right away quick, or not at all. The directors of the company vote next week."

"You're sure of the vote?"

"Sure thing, O'Connor says. He ought to know."

Esther stirred. A glass on the tray fell over, knocking the decanter. There remained nothing to do but to open the door. Stone was standing near the fire. He looked up at her entrance, and something in the expression of his face told her that he knew she had been listening.

"Have you finished your talk?"

She addressed Herbert directly, but it was Stone who answered in assent. Her husband hardly opened his mouth the rest of the evening. While they sipped their drinks, it was Stone who did most of the talking.

When at last he rose and took his leave, her husband accompanied him to the door. The two men stayed in the hall for some time, conversing in whispers. As soon as her husband re-entered the sitting-room she ran towards him.

"Herbert, won't you tell me what Stone's been talking about?"

"I'm sorry I can't, Esther."

"Well, then," she announced, in a high, clear voice, "all I have to say is *this*—if you miss a good chance of making money, Herbert, I'll never forgive you."

He did not answer satisfactorily, so she flounced out of the room and went to bed.

The next morning, obeying an instinct of wisdom, she made no mention of the preceding evening. They breakfasted in silence. Then he kissed her, lit his usual morning cigar, and left without really seeming to have noticed her presence.

Taking up a pencil, the same with which her husband had scribbled figures the night before, she began to note, as far as she could remember, some of the money she owed. The result was more than she had thought possible. "It *can't* be!" she told herself, and experienced a panic-stricken sense of impending reckoning. Her mind, with a cowardly shift, slid off to a dinner she was planning to give the following week. This dinner meant a great deal to her. There were six people coming, four of whom had never yet accepted an invitation from her.

There would have to be champagne, she thought, and champagne meant other expensive things. She remembered the bills again. They reared themselves like ugly enemies everywhere she turned.

If Herbert would only listen to Stone! Stone became the solution of all her troubles. If they needed money, as she understood to be the case, from the scraps of talk she had heard that evening of eavesdropping, then they must have money. Herbert must find it somehow, somewhere. That was why Stone had come to him. She believed in Stone now, because Stone spoke and acted with magnificent assurance. The mere idea that Herbert should fail him drove her to a nervous state of exasperation.

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It was in this mood and with these thoughts that she greeted her husband when he came home that evening. It was a mood which stayed with her.

The week fled, however, without any satisfaction. The day before the dinner she was to give, she was no farther along than she had been the night Stone came to the flat. Unable to control her impatience, she telephoned him. Both at his office and club she was told that he was out. She caught a glimpse of him that same afternoon, driving in a motor with an older man. The pair were engaged in such confidential talk that Stone did not see her. When her husband came home that evening, neglecting no opportunity of mentioning Stone, she at once announced where and how she had seen him.

To her surprise, her husband betrayed sudden interest and questioned her closely about the man who was with Stone. Upon her casual description he seemed more agitated than ever, and went at once to the telephone and rang up Stone. But he could get him at neither of his clubs.

Stalking away from the telephone he began pulling on his coat.

"Herbert, *where* are you going?" she cried.

"I'm sorry," he mumbled. "Business—I must go out. Don't stay up for me." The door slammed; he was gone.

Her husband came in very late, and left early the next morning. She did not question or reproach him. Her dinner was to be that evening, and she did not propose to have the excitement of preparation for it marred by discussion. She treated him, therefore, with every appearance of good humour, and reminded him sweetly of the necessity of being home in time to dress.

By the afternoon, under her brisk supervision, the little flat wore a festive air. There were flowers about, whose perfume in such limited space was too sweet; the curtains were drawn, candles lighted; the fire crackled brightly. The modest dining-room was in the haughty charge of Janet Lambert's second man, who circled patronizingly around the mahogany table, bloated to twice its size by extra leaves. Janet Lambert's silver, borrowed for the occasion, gleamed white on the glossy new tablecloth; a basket of violets and roses smothered the centre of the table.

At half-past six she began to dress. It was half-past seven before she heard the familiar click of Herbert's key in the front-door lock.

She flew out to meet him, carefully holding up her white satin skirt.

"Herbie, how late you are! You'll have to hurry."

In the light, as he stood before the mirror, she could not help noticing how pale he was.

"Herbie, dear, you're tired."

"I'm all right," he answered briefly.

She was running out of the door to meet the guests when he called her.

"Esther, I'm expecting an important telephone. When it comes, even if we're at dinner, I shall have to answer it."

She paused a second, frowning. "How tiresome! Couldn't it have waited, Herbert? It's such bad form to go to the telephone in the middle of a dinner."

"Esther! Esther!" her friend Janet Lambert's voice called from the hall.

"Coming!"

She picked up her skirt, and turned half-hesitatingly towards her husband.

"Herbert!"—there was sudden troubled appeal in her voice—"there's nothing the matter—is there?"

"We'll talk about that—later, Esther," he said.

"Oh, then, there *is*? Herbert, you frighten me. You act so—queer."

"Run along, Babes. I don't mean to frighten you."

She swayed in his direction, then shook her shoulders as if trying to rid herself of something disagreeable, and flew to meet Janet Lambert.

When dinner was announced there was laughing and joking at the small space around the table. Esther sat back luxuriously in her arm-chair. She was satisfied with the way the dinner was going, and she thought of nothing else. These three women and three men were brilliant representatives of the best New York had to offer socially and financially. She hoped that Herbert would appreciate the significance of their presence as his guests. She looked proudly across the table at him.

A twinge of premonition nipped at her happy mood. Decidedly she could never look at her husband of late without feeling that same premonition of trouble to come.

As the chicken was being served, the telephone rang. She heard it distinctly, and looked up in time to see her husband, with a few murmured excuses, leave the room.

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The dinner continued, everyone pretending not to notice her husband's prolonged absence. When the ices were served Esther could control herself no longer.

Suddenly she rose from the table. "Do forgive me," she said. "I'm afraid my husband is ill. I'd better go and see."

The telephone stood by the bed, its receiver in place.

Her husband stood before her, his tie crooked, his shirt-front creased. He kept his face half-turned away, but in the dim light she could see that he was ghastly pale.

"Go back to your guests," he said.

"Herbert, *what's* the matter?"

"I don't feel well. Go back to your friends."

She backed to the door and stood there, slim and young, in her white satin dress, her hair soft about her face, her eyes helpless.

She turned the knob of the door slowly. Then he called in a sudden husky voice that twirled her around at his summons, "Esther! Esther!"

His arms were stretched out, his face was distorted with unaccustomed emotion.

"Esther, come and kiss me."

She gave a quick little cry, and ran to him. He held her tight, kissed her once and let her go.

She went blindly, without looking back. She dared not. Her heart was thumping loud enough for her to count its beats. Like a child who is afraid of the unknown, she feared some hitherto avoided truth, feared with cowardly prudery some naked thing to be faced. But as soon as she left the room, it was as if an evil hypnotic charm were broken. She flew into the dining-room, conscious of distinct relief at the immediate effect of its lights and warmth.

"You poor people," she said, speaking very fast. "Will you ever forgive us? Herbert isn't—well. He's got pains. I've been dosing him with brandy, and I don't know how to apologize, but he really mustn't come back again."

Janet Lambert rose resolutely from the table.

"I think we'd better all *go*, and leave you to nurse poor Mr. Rogers."

Esther protested, and they stayed for coffee and a little desultory conversation.

Then their adjectives, and perfumes, and prosperous presences trailed off; the door was closed. She was alone at last. Even the servants had gone. There was no more reason for delay. She felt herself like a creature caught and pinched between the relentless fingers of the inevitable. There was no getting away from what waited behind the bedroom door.

"Everyone's gone, Herbie," she called. "Let me in."

The key turned. She had known the door would be locked. Her husband stood before her exactly as he had done an hour before. Nothing about him seemed to have changed, except that he had taken off his collar.

"Come into the sitting-room. It's cold here," she said, and led the way.

"Now," she continued, "what's the matter? What is it all about?"

He sank heavily into a big arm-chair, and sat as if overcome.

"Stone's gone back on me," he mumbled. His voice was utterly dejected.

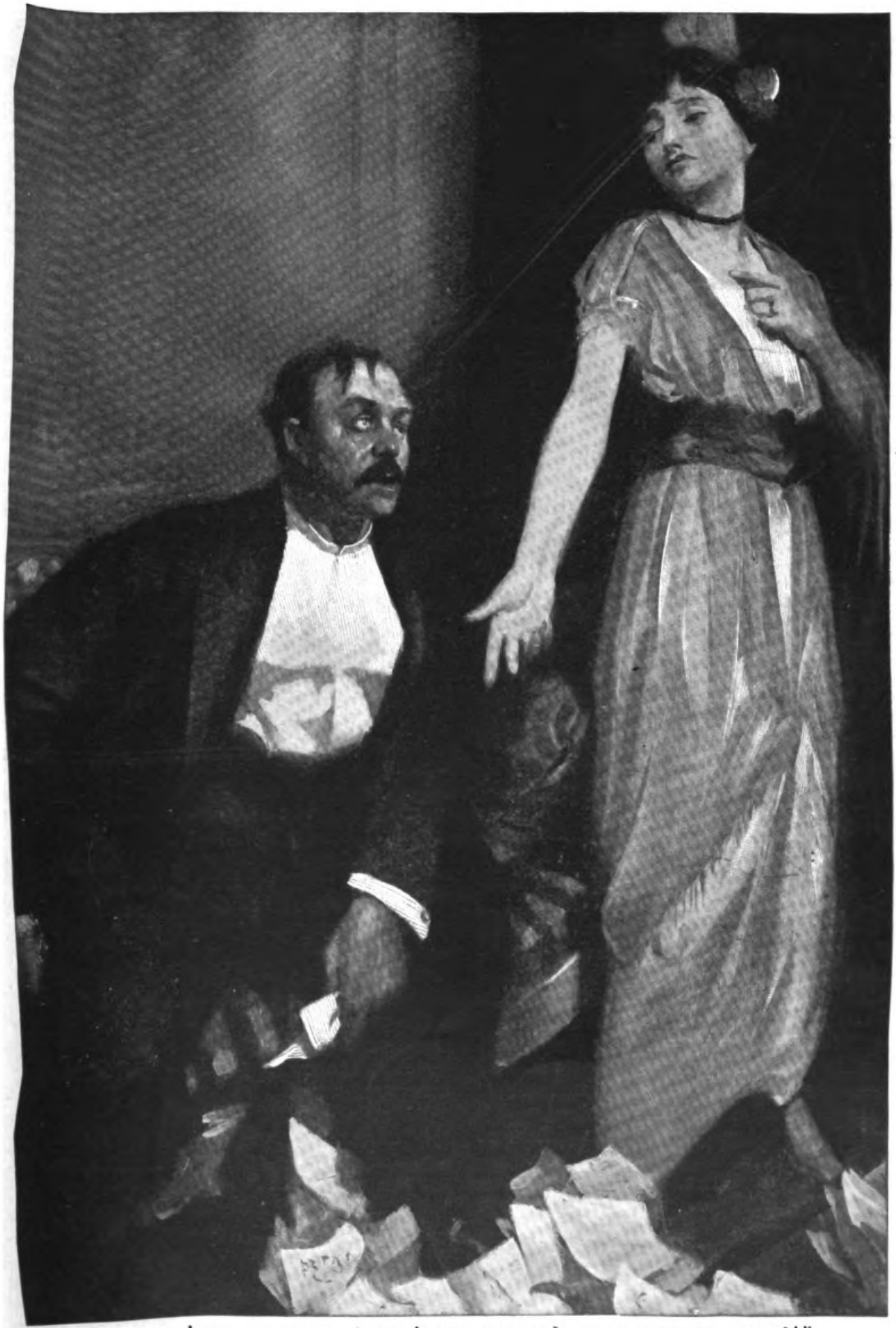
"Herbert, what do you mean?"

"I forgot you didn't know," he said, slowly. "I shall have to tell you now. I've made a mess of things. Wait, don't say a word. Let me finish. Only try to understand that I wanted to do for the best. A few weeks ago Stone came to me with a proposition that looked like money to me. There's a company—the New Western Line—that's been building a lot of trolleys lately, out to the suburbs. They're a big concern—millions behind them. Well, Stone knows one of the directors—O'Connor his name is. They've done business together before. He's the man, by the way, who was with Stone yesterday. Stone had sworn to me that he hadn't seen him."

She had sunk on her knees by the fire, unheeding of her white gown, and as her husband progressed painfully with his story she stared at him, her eyes growing wider and more intent.

"Stone came to me with a tip this O'Connor had given him," he continued. "It seems that the New Western Company was going to buy a certain tract of land just outside of a town called Richmond, with a view to building a trolley out there. I believe they already own land in the town. Property's comparatively cheap out there; the farmers are green. They don't know. Once the trolley was run through, values would go kiting up—do you see? The company hadn't voted officially yet. But Stone swore it was a sure thing on account of the land they owned already out there. Anyone smart enough to buy the piece they had their eye on before they bid for it could sell it to them at his own price."

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"'NOW,' SHE CONTINUED, 'WHAT'S THE MATTER? WHAT IS IT ALL ABOUT?'"

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"Oh, I see," she said, slowly. "But, then, why didn't Stone buy it himself?"

"Stone hadn't the money," he explained. "Neither had O'Connor; and, anyway, O'Connor couldn't afford to appear in the deal. His part in it had to be kept quiet."

"But why did Stone think *you* could help?" she questioned, sharply.

"He didn't think I had the money ready. But he needed someone sure and discreet to try and raise it. He knows very well that few men would go into a deal with him. He's got a bad name. I've learned that too late. He's a slick talker, though. He persuaded me there was no chance of anything going wrong with the combination. I thought it over a day or two. There was no time to waste. Then I cabled Jenkins. He was the only man I'd have asked for money. I only needed him to lend me enough money for that first payment. We hoped to sell, at our own price, to the company before the next payment was due."

She scrambled to her feet and went over to him. "Did he *lend* it to you?"

Her husband sank deeper in the chair. "He never answered my cable. Guess he never got it. There wasn't time to write. Stone kept at me—I was *mad* to make money for you, Babes," he burst out with sudden passion. "You didn't think I cared for what—you wanted—but it drove me crazy to see you so discontented, so I——"

"Yes, what did you do?" She put her hand on his shoulder.

"I borrowed money on Jenkins's securities—fifty-five thousand dollars they gave me. I bought the land a week ago—paid down the first instalment. I—I was sure I could get back the securities and be straight again with my profit by the time Jenkins reached Paris this spring."

Her hand dropped from his shoulder. "You did that!"

"Three days after I'd paid the money down, and pledged myself to pay one hundred thousand dollars more in a month, and another eighty thousand dollars before February 5th, Stone began to act queer. He avoided me. And I heard a few things too—at my club—about him and O'Connor. Then you saw him driving with O'Connor, and I knew he'd lied to me about seeing him. This afternoon the board of directors of the New Western met to vote on the purchase of the land. Stone was to telephone me the result, at seven o'clock. I waited at the club to hear from him. He didn't telephone. Then I got badly frightened. I tried to telephone him—couldn't find him anywhere. I came home—there was the dinner——"

"Oh, the dinner!" she cried. "If I'd known! I suppose the telephone then was from Stone?"

"I didn't want you to know," he said. "Yes, the telephone was from Stone. He pretended to be beside himself with despair. Said O'Connor hadn't let him know until late. They'd voted—to change the whole route of the trolley, and to buy—another piece of land on the opposite side of the town, and the two of them have protected themselves, without a thought of me. They've probably been bribed by the people who own the other piece of land to influence the company's vote. It wasn't in their game to tell me."

"Oh, Herbert, how terrible!"

"It's pretty near as bad as it can be," he said.

"How could you do such a thing?" she cried out, shrilly.

Her husband began to pace the floor, his hands behind his back. "How *could* I? Heaven only knows! Now it's done, and there's Jenkins and his money—I'm nearly crazy thinking about him. I've been dishonest, Esther—with my best friend, too. I've been a thief. I might as well call a spade a spade."

"You ought to have thought of me before you could do such a dreadful thing," she said, in a high, hard voice, and sat down in the chair he had left. Her eyes were brilliant and cruel, her cheeks flaming.

"Why, it was all for you, Esther!" He stopped his pacing and stared down at her. "You wanted to be rich, didn't you? Didn't you keep telling me to go ahead—not to miss a chance?"

"I didn't tell you to be *dishonest*, Herbert. Suppose Jenkins puts you in prison!"

He gave a dreary little laugh. "Jenkins would never do that."

"And the other people—you owe them money, too?"

"Yes."

"How could you—how *could* you?" she repeated, with growing violence. "What are you going to do?"

"It's hard to know—we shall have to go away together, Babes, somewhere quiet where no one knows us. We shall have to save and save until I can pay back dear old Jenks. The others have got fifty-five thousand dollars out of me. That's all! I'll write to Jenkins. I'll tell him the whole truth——"

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"You want us to go away," she said, her voice rising again to a thin, furious pitch. "To go away for the rest of our lives, because you weren't clever enough to come out ahead, because you took a miserable fifty-five thousand dollars from Jenkins that he would hardly miss—he's so rich. You think I'm going to scrimp and save——!"

"Why, Esther, you don't understand."

"Yes, I do," she cried, passionately. "I understand that it's just like a man to get into such a thing and then expect to make his wife suffer for it."

He came near to her and tried to take her in his arms, but she jerked away and, slipping from the chair, escaped to the end of the room, where she stood shivering.

"What are you going to do?" was all she said.

"I've told you, Esther. We shall have to begin over again. I'm going to leave all the capital I've got with Jenkins. There's about ten thousand dollars. Perhaps he'll let me take one thousand dollars of that to start on. I'll work hard. We've always managed to get along, haven't we?"

"So you think I'm going to live on even less than we've had, and leave New York into the bargain, just when I'm beginning to know people and have some sort of life! Oh, no; that's too funny." She threw back her head and gave a sharp, uncontrolled little laugh, standing in front of him, an ugly glitter in her eyes, her hands twisting and untwisting.

"And how much do you suppose we've been living on?" she snapped, suddenly.

"All I could make, though it wasn't much. I don't suppose we have anything put by for a rainy day. Oh, Esther, girl, I'm down and out. Help me, won't you?"

"Do you think," she said, slowly, "that I've been living on the absurd little you allowed me? Do you think, once I'd learned from other women how a woman like me should live, that I have been satisfied with what you gave me? Do you suppose I could have kept up with my friends, dressed decently, entertained decently, on what you earned?"

"Why, Esther, what do you mean?"

She looked him straight in the eyes. "I mean just this: that we've been doing what everyone else does—living twice as well as we could afford."

"I—I don't understand."

"Wait a moment and I'll show you. I'd have had to tell you, anyway. Just wait—and then talk of running away, and paying Jenkins and starving ourselves on less than we've had. Wait for me here——"

Without giving him time to answer she went direct to the bureau drawer in which she kept her bills hidden, and tossed its contents on the floor. Gloves, veils, handkerchiefs went flying, scattered by the nervous strength of her small fingers.

At last she came to the bills. She caught them up, and without thought, without mercy, winging in a sharp, poisonous flight of anger, she flung the bills at him. They fell, a flattened shower of white and yellow shapes; they hit him and slid, some on the divan, some on his knees, a few on the floor.

"Talk of what you owe—this is what I owe. They're my bills—now what have you got to say?"

"Good heavens!" he murmured, and mechanically took one up and turned it over, staring at the envelope.

"They're bills that have been running, some of them for two months," she went on, recklessly. "I didn't dare tell you. I kept hoping you'd make more money—and then it wouldn't matter to you. But now it's finished, and I don't care—I don't care any more."

Her voice choked and broke. He rose suddenly. The bills which had lain on his knees drifted to the floor. He held only the one he had picked up.

His face had grown paler, his eyes looked black. For the first time that evening she felt dimly the enormity of what was happening between them, husband and wife.

"You can't blame me," she tried to say.

He began to speak slowly, as if measuring his words.

"So I come to my wife for some of that pity and help that women give to men whom they love, when the men have been weak and fools. I ask you for your faith at a moment when some men would blow their brains out, and this is your answer, is it? A handful of miserable paltry bills, a bunch of empty-headed women's debts you didn't dare tell me about before. You guessed, didn't you, that if I've done all that I've done, it's been for you. I wasn't going to throw it at you. But it is you and your pestering night and day, and your scoldings and reproaches. You drove me to this." He put a hand to his forehead. "What a woman! You've deceived and lied and waited, then, for the right moment to show me these? Well, this is the right moment."

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"You can't talk," she faltered.

"I can't—talk, when everything I've believed in has been broken to bits, every chance I've had smashed, all because I've been a weak fool, and wanted to try, and try harder all the time, to give you what you wanted! I never could satisfy *you*. You're the kind who always wants more. Do you think that all husbands can be millionaires and satisfy the craving of their wives for spending and show? It's the appetite of you that makes men dishonest."

"Herbert!" She tried to cling to him, but he shook her off.

"Didn't you know I should never be rich? I'm not the man to know how. But if you'd been the right kind of woman, you'd have been content on what I could have given you. What's all this, anyway?" He tore open the envelope he still held, and stood gazing at its contents. Then he read aloud: "Veils, gloves, silk petticoat, aigrette. Oh, Heaven! It makes me sick. I owe thousands. I've lost the best friend a man ever had. I shall lose him when he knows. Men have a different idea of honour. And it was all to pay for this stuff? How much do they amount to? Do you even know?" He caught her roughly by the shoulder. "Do you—do you?"

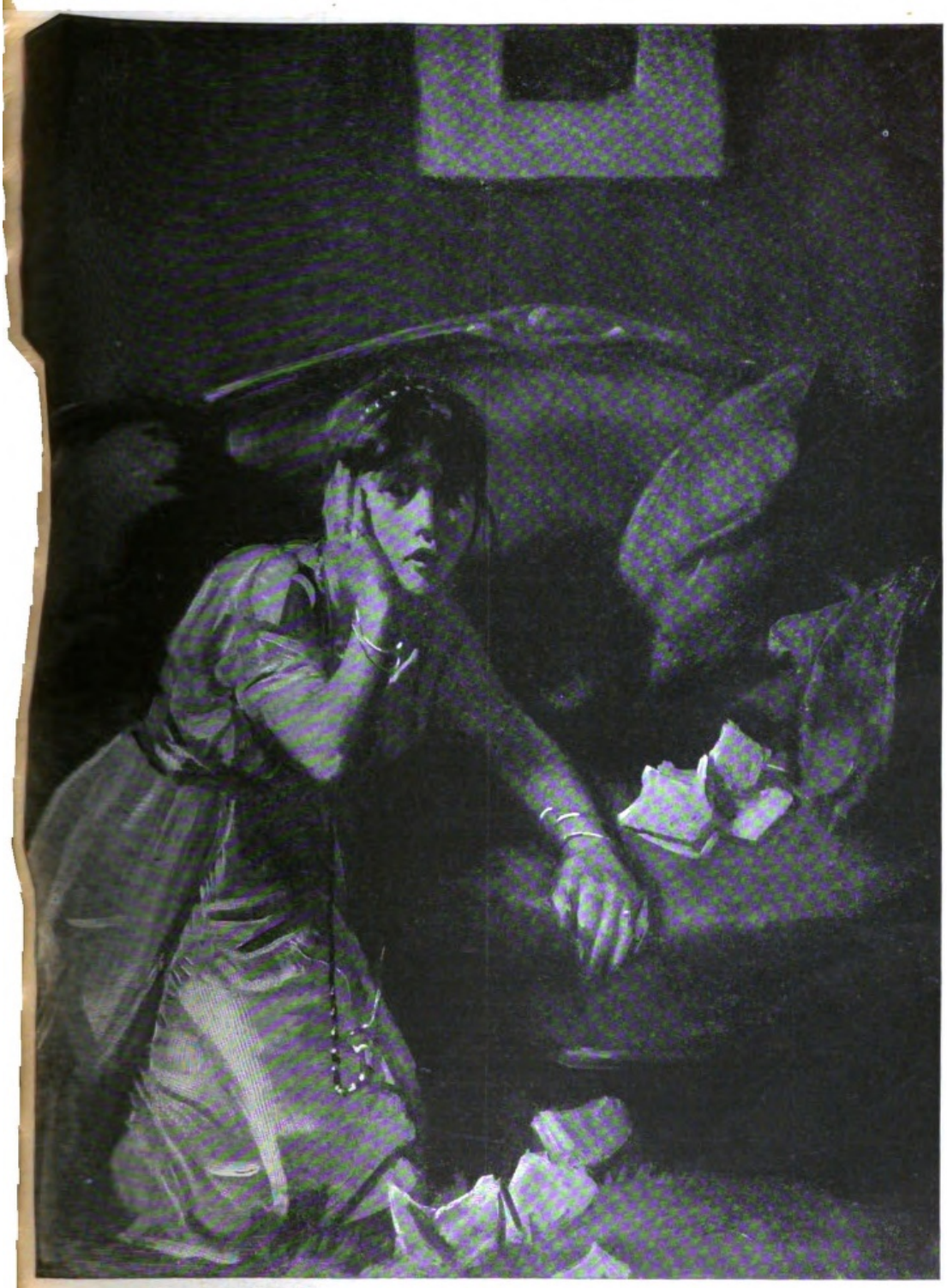


"LITTLE BY LITTLE SHE RAISED HERSELF ON HER ELBOW AND

"About a thousand dollars," she admitted, and began to cry.

"Is that all? Then it's really a hair that's broken the camel's back. To give me these

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LISTENED, HOPING HER HUSBAND WOULD COME BACK TO COMFORT HER."

to-night, of all nights! And I thought you'd be the only one to help me. I thought you'd help me begin over again." He seemed to be thinking aloud, rather than addressing her.

"Herbert, I didn't mean to."

She wept, coughing and choking, crumpled like a soft, discarded bit of silk on the divan.

The bills, thinly scattered over the floor, seemed a meagre lot after all. He stood staring down at them and at her.

"Oh, what's the use?" he muttered, and left the room.

She was forlornly conscious of his going. But the instinct to cry out and call him back resolved itself into a faint whimper, smothered by the cushions. She half rose to follow him, then slid back, a limp, inefficient bundle of ruffled gown, soaked handkerchief, and damp hair clinging about her eyes. The very salt taste of her tears rendered her more helpless. She was sorry for herself, and thought how sad it was that everything had turned out so badly. She rehearsed an explanation to Janet Lambert, and wondered why Janet's husband could not help Herbert. She thought of telephoning Janet at once and telling her the tragic news. Then at the idea of how tragic the news was she began to cry again. It was lonely crying in an empty room. Little by little she raised herself on her elbow and listened, hoping her husband would come back to comfort her.

Then suddenly she stopped crying. What she heard to comfort her was a shot.

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# WHEN THEY MARRIED.

## AN INQUIRY INTO THE AGES AT WHICH OUR CELEBRATED MEN BECAME HUSBANDS.

Illustrated by Treyer Evans.

THE philosophy of marriage has many debatable points, and none has perhaps been more debated than the age at which a man ought to take unto himself a wife. In abstract theory opinions differ widely, and it has occurred to us that more interesting than a collection of opinions would be an examination of the data showing the actual age of marriage on the part of the leading representatives of different spheres of thought and action. Thus our question becomes, not "At what age do you think a man ought to marry?" but "At what age did you marry?"

It is a well-established fact that during the past two generations the marriage age of men has in the higher ranks of society risen considerably. But as the result of our inquiry it appears that the rise in age has varied very much as between different professions.

Actors marry younger than the members of any other profession. It may be that they are more susceptible to Cupid's shafts; that playing the lover so much upon the stage they lose their hearts more readily in real life. Prudential considerations, too, may have less weight with them than with those who follow more prosaic vocations. At any rate this would be according to the popular conception of the actor's temperament. In point of fact, however, the actor's early marriage rate may be quite independent of these two considerations. An actor's earning capacity matures quickly. He has, as a rule, a much shorter period of probation than the members of other professions. As an actor pure and simple, indeed, youth may be said to be his greatest asset. As "juvenile lead" he receives a bigger salary than when the passing of the years relegates him to "old men's" parts. Of course, it would be absurd to suppose that the most eminent members

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of the profession necessarily enjoy smaller incomes in middle age than in their early manhood. A certain degree of eminence almost invariably brings with it the emoluments of theatre ownership or management, but the fact remains that actors seldom or never find it necessary to wait until this position has been secured before incurring the responsibilities of matrimony.

Among leading actors of to-day, Sir J. Forbes-Robertson, who did not go to the altar until he was forty-seven, is the only instance we have found of marriage being deferred until middle age. Sir H. Beerbohm Tree married at thirty, and this was also the age at which Mr. Gerald du Maurier and Mr. Arthur Bourchier made their marriage vows. Mr. Granville Barker was a year younger, whilst Sir Squire Bancroft and Mr. H. B. Irving were both twenty-six. Sir Charles Wyndham was twenty-three, Mr. George Grossmith twenty-one, and Sir John Hare a boy of twenty when they renounced bachelorhood.
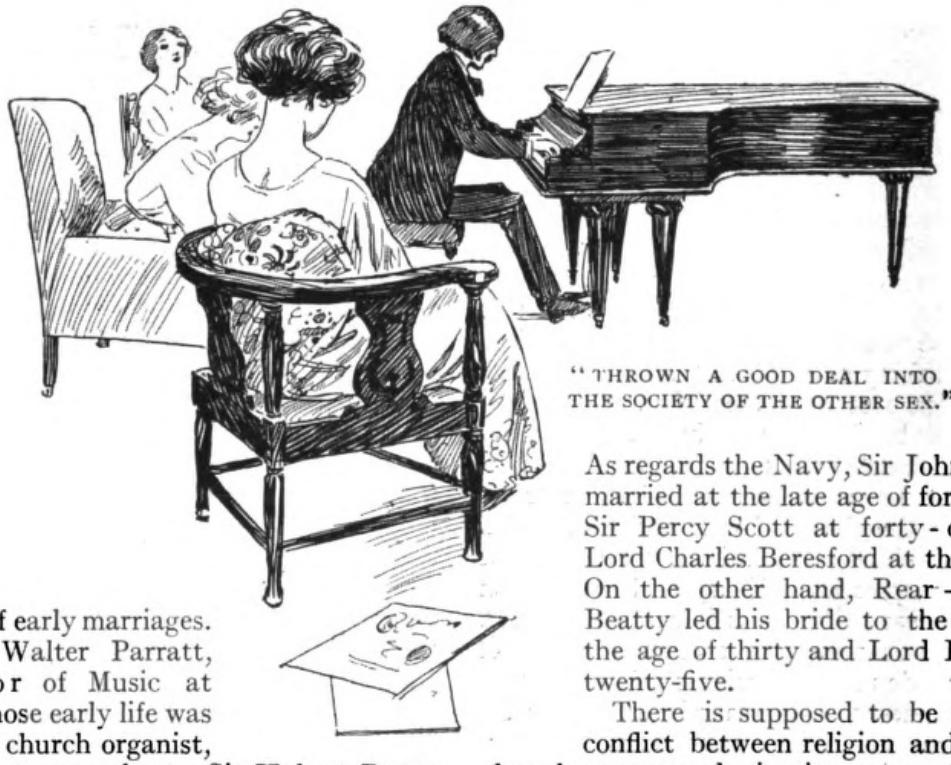
Men of business come second to actors, their marriage age being eighteen months older. Prudential considerations, it might be supposed, would weigh more heavily with business men than with any other class of the community. But it may well be that in this case these considerations operate against delay in taking a wife and "settling down" to the pleasures of domesticity, which may sometimes be humdrum, but are usually "safe." The business man recognizes, perhaps, that he who has given hostages to fortune in the shape of wife and family will be the more likely to attain it by the exercise of those virtues of industry and application which success in business is said to call for. Be this as it may, the careers of some of our self-made men of business afford remarkable instances of early marriages. Thus Sir John Brunner, who founded the largest chemical works in the world, married at the age of twenty-two, having entered a mercantile office when only fifteen. Lord Northcliffe, who needs no description, Sir Andrew Noble, chairman of the great shipbuilding and armaments firm of Sir W. G. Armstrong, Whitworth, and Co., Ltd., and Sir W. H. Lever, the soap millionaire, were only a year older when they took upon themselves the responsibilities of the married state. And other similar instances could be given. Sir Owen Philipps, perhaps the most powerful man in the shipping world, who did not venture upon the sea of matrimony until he was thirty-nine, is one of the few exceptions to prove the rule among men of business.

There is a difference of only nine months between the marriage age of business men and that of members of the legal profession. Considering the circumstances of this profession, one would have expected it to occupy a position much above the average age of thirty years and seven months instead of being two years and two months below it. It is to be remembered, however, that in regard to barristers, a much larger proportion of whom obtain celebrity than solicitors, they often possess independent means apart from their professional income, or in their earlier years are able to supplement this by other kinds of work, such as journalism and teaching. It used to be an adage among young barristers that an early marriage with a solicitor's daughter was the shortest road to professional success, but there is little or no evidence that the practical application of this adage has materially affected the average matrimonial age of the higher branch of the legal profession. Sir Edward Clarke, perhaps the most successful living advocate, married at the early age of twenty-five, two years after he had been called to the Bar, and when his briefs were still very few, but it was not to a solicitor's daughter. Sir John Simon, the Attorney-General, was only a year older, his call to the altar and to the Bar taking place within a few months of each other. The present Lord Chancellor, Lord Reading, formerly Sir Rufus Isaacs, and a future Lord Chancellor, Mr. F. E. Smith, K.C., M.P., were of the same age—twenty-seven—when they entered the temple of Hymen, and this was also the age of our youngest judge, Mr. Justice Shearman. Sir Samuel Evans, whose chief work is now the untying of nuptial knots, wedded at the age of twenty-eight. Mr. Justice Bargrave Deane, his colleague in the Divorce Court, did not marry until he was forty-one. Mr. Justice Darling, whose mordant wit is the delight of the Courts, showed a cynical disregard of the joys of wedlock until he was thirty-six, whilst Mr. Justice Swinfen Eady resisted them until he was forty-three. On the other hand, the best-known London solicitor, Sir George Lewis, was pretty near the professional average at the age of twenty-eight before he signed the marriage register.

In point of temperament the musician might well be regarded as the antithesis of the lawyer. Yet there is only a month's difference between their average marriage age—twenty-eight years and six months as compared with twenty-eight years and five months. The lawyer, cold and austere as his parchment, the musician, fiery and emotional or soft and


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tender as the notes he interprets—and yet they both marry young, or comparatively so. Temperament apart, what is there in the circumstances of the musician having a bearing upon the subject? He resembles the actor to some extent, perhaps, in that, although his training may be long and severe, his earning power comes relatively early in life, this being particularly true of singers, whose personality on platform or stage is an important factor in their success. Then it must also be remembered that in the course of their professional work musicians are thrown a great deal into the society of the other sex, whether as teachers or artistes. Among the instrumental section of the musical profession there are several notable instances of early marriages. Thus Sir Walter Parratt, Professor of Music at Oxford, whose early life was spent as a church organist, married at twenty-three; Sir Hubert Parry, Director of the Royal College of Music, at twenty-four; and Sir Charles Stanford, Professor of Music at Cambridge, at twenty-six. Mr. Ben Davies, who remains the best-known British vocalist on active service, was twenty-seven when he led a sister artiste to the altar. Sir Edward Elgar did not marry until he was thirty-two, whilst another distinguished composer, Sir F. H. Cowen, remained a bachelor until he was fifty-six.



"THROWN A GOOD DEAL INTO THE SOCIETY OF THE OTHER SEX."

How are we to account for the great disparity in the marrying age of the Army and Navy—twenty-nine years and five months in the case of the former and thirty-three years and two months in that of the latter? There is one obvious explanation—that officers in the Army, wherever they may be quartered, have always ample opportunities of cultivating the society of the fair sex, whilst for officers in the Navy, spending most of their time afloat, these opportunities are few and far between. Although the Navy, perhaps, takes the first place in the national esteem, we suppose that it is still true to say that soldiers are the spoiled darlings of society, the heroes of the ballroom, for whom the haughtiest belles have kindly looks. Lord Kitchener, as is well known, has successfully resisted the blandishments of the sex, but Sir Ian Hamilton eschewed single blessedness at thirty-five, Sir John French at twenty-eight, and Lord Roberts at twenty-seven. As regards the Navy, Sir John Jellicoe married at the late age of forty-three, Sir Percy Scott at forty-one, and Lord Charles Beresford at thirty-two. On the other hand, Rear-Admiral Beatty led his bride to the altar at the age of thirty and Lord Fisher at twenty-five.

There is supposed to be constant conflict between religion and science, but clergymen and scientists are much akin in regard to their marrying age, the average for the former being twenty-nine years and seven months and for the latter thirty years and three months. Considering the circumstances of a clergyman's life, the ease with which he becomes acquainted with all the young ladies in his congregation, and the high regard in which he is usually held by them, it is, perhaps, surprising that their marrying age is as high as it is. On the other hand, one's usual conception of the scientist, a studious recluse immersed in his work, would have suggested for him a much higher marrying age. But there it is, something of a paradox which we shall not attempt to explain. Canon Newbold

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and Dr. Clifford at twenty-six, and the Bishops of Chester (Dr. Jayne) and Carlisle (Dr. Diggle) at twenty-seven, were among the youngest of the clerical bridegrooms. The Archbishop of Canterbury (Dr. Davidson) married at the age of thirty, the Bishop of Hereford (Dr. Percival) at twenty-eight, the Bishop of Worcester (Dr. Yeatman-Biggs) at thirty, the Bishop of Manchester (Dr. Knox) at thirty-three, and the Bishop of Bath and Wells (Dr. Kennion) at thirty-seven. The Bishop of London (Dr. Winnington Ingram) and the Rev. R. S. Horton are among the distinguished clerical bachelors.

Among men of science, the most youthful bridegroom was Sir William Abney, who took unto himself a wife whilst still a student of twenty. Sir Norman Lockyer was only two, Sir William Crookes four, and Sir Oliver Lodge six years older when they did the same. At the other end of the scale, Sir George Darwin was thirty-nine, Sir Archibald Geikie and Sir W. Christie both thirty-six, and Sir Henry Roscoe thirty-four when they found time to woo and wed.

Of statesmen it is impossible to generalize,



"OFFICERS IN THE NAVY, SPENDING MOST OF THEIR TIME AFLOAT, THESE OPPORTUNITIES ARE FEW AND FAR BETWEEN."



"OFFICERS IN THE ARMY HAVE ALWAYS AMPLE OPPORTUNITIES OF CULTIVATING THE SOCIETY OF THE FAIR SEX."

drawn as they are partly from what used to be called the governing class, the class which enjoys all the advantages that inherited wealth and social position give them, and partly from all the other classes, who together form the intellectual life of the nation. We should expect them to be somewhere near the average marrying age of the whole, and, as a matter of fact, at thirty years and five months they are only two months below it.

Among statesmen of the front rank, Lord Crewe enjoys the distinction, we believe, of having married youngest—at the age of twenty-two. Sir Edward Grey and Mr. John Burns both entered the marriage state at twenty-three, Lord Lansdowne and Mr. Walter Long at twenty-four, and Mr. Asquith and Mr. Lloyd George at twenty-five. Mr. Birrell married at

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the age of twenty-nine, Lord Rosebery at thirty-one, Mr. Redmond at thirty-two, Mr. Bonar Law at thirty-three, and Mr. Winston Churchill at thirty-four. Thirty-six was the age at which Mr. Lewis Harcourt and Lord Curzon achieved a union of hearts. Mr. Austen Chamberlain was not similarly successful until he was forty-three, Mr. Dillon forty-four, and Mr. McKenna forty-five. Mr. Balfour, Lord Haldane, and Lord Milner are still members of the noble—or ignoble—order of bachelors.

It is sometimes supposed that a wife is almost essential to a doctor's professional success. In the light of this dictum it is interesting to find that the marriage age of the profession represents the average for the whole of the thirteen professions or vocations whose statistics we have analysed, viz., thirty years and seven months. Of course, it must be remembered that the training of a doctor is both long and expensive, and that he seldom gets into practice for himself until late in the twenties.

Sir Frederick Treves, who is perhaps our most celebrated surgeon, is among the few members of the profession who married quite young—at the age of twenty-four, to be exact, when he was still walking the hospitals. Sir Lauder Brunton and Sir James Crichton-Browne were but a year older when they entered into the marriage contract. On the other hand, Sir G. Anderson Critchett, the famous oculist, was thirty-eight, Sir Alfred D. Fripp was thirty-six, and Sir Thomas Barlow thirty-five.

Well above the average at thirty-four come the artists. Their position is probably to be explained by the Bohemianism of the art-student's life, a Bohemianism which resents the restrictions of the marriage tie, and partly also by the precarious nature of the artist's income until his reputation is well established. Among the members of the Royal Academy, Sir William B. Richmond appears to be quite the exception in having been married at twenty-five. Sir E. J. Poynter, the President, waited until he was thirty before undertaking a husband's responsibilities. Mr. Arthur Hacker was forty-nine when he made the venture, Mr. B. W. Leader forty-six, and Mr. C. Napier Hemy forty. Among the black-and-white men, Mr. Bernard Partridge had seen thirty-six summers before marrying, Mr. John Hassall thirty-five, and Mr. Will Owen twenty-eight.

Our authors, on the average, married eleven months later than the artists. What we have said with regard to the tardy marriages of artists applies, we suppose, with equal force to the even more tardy marriages of authors. It may be also that with the classic example of Mrs. Carlyle always in their mind the young ladies distrust the prospect of marriage to an author with his "trying" ways and erratic habits, and that it is only with riper years and fuller knowledge that they realize that the lot of an author's wife can have its compensations.

Among living authors of the first rank, Sir A. Conan Doyle and Mr. Rudyard Kipling appear to have married youngest, their ages being twenty-six and twenty-seven respectively. Mr. Thomas Hardy married at thirty-four, Mr. Zangwill at thirty-nine, Mr. Anthony Hope and the Poet Laureate (Dr. Bridges) at forty, and Mr. Bernard Shaw at forty-two. Mr. G. K. Chesterton (twenty-seven), Mr. Maurice Hewlett (twenty-seven), and Mr. Jerome K. Jerome (twenty-nine) have helped to bring the average down, whilst Mr. George R. Sims (fifty-four) and Mr. W. W. Jacobs (thirty-seven) have exercised an influence in the opposite direction.

Schoolmasters, who top the list with an average marriage age of thirty-five years and two months, could doubtless make a good defence if arraigned before a court of fair ladies. In their early professional life stipends are too small for the comfortable maintenance of a home in accordance with their social status. In the large boarding-schools, moreover, it is often a condition of their appointment that they shall live on the premises and be "unencumbered" with wife and family. Looking out the records of the heads of our great educational establishments, it is consequently very rare to find one who was married in his twenties, and there are many instances of marriage being deferred until the forties.

If any definite conclusion can be drawn from the results of our inquiry, we think it is this—that whilst temperament—the susceptibility to *la grande passion*, if you like—has its part, a more important factor in determining the age at which men marry is to be found in the circumstances of their vocation that render marriage easy or difficult of attainment.

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# THE TREASURE.

## FROM THE FRENCH OF

# PAUL BOURGET

## (OF THE ACADÉMIE FRANÇAISE).

**Translated by E. Dyke.**

**Illustrated by P. Baynes.**

There is no art more powerful, and at the same time more varied, than that of M. Paul Bourget, some of whose stories have already made their appearance in our pages. All the usual features of this great novelist's work—an exciting plot, deep feeling, psychological insight—appear in this drama.

MICHEL COUDERC had been working hard that evening—or, rather, that night, for by the clock on the mantelpiece it was now close upon one o'clock. He gathered up and counted the sheets blackened with his firm, clear handwriting.

"At this rate," he said to himself, "my thesis will be finished before the 1st of January, and the heroic Moulin will have his little memorial."

The title-page of the precious manuscript was thus inscribed: "A Lieutenant of Frotté: Moulin, called also Michelot."

Michel Couderc, a former pupil at l'Ecole des Chartes, wishing to obtain a professorship at a provincial University, was preparing the historical paper required of candidates for the post. A small but regular income had enabled him to prolong his studies in Paris without having to work for money. The furniture, which somewhat overcrowded his modest four-storey lodging in the Rue Vanneau, testified to the family's former affluence, of which that income was all that remained.

Now, with idle pen, he sat dreaming in his study, the windows of which overlooked the garden of the Austrian Embassy.

For a reason of his own he had chosen as the subject of his thesis the Chouan Revolution—an event which recalled to his mind a thrilling drama of real life in which an ancestor of his own had taken part. This man—whose name was François Couderc, also called Franquet—had been a servant at the Castle of Cherchemont, and in his fidelity to his master had sacrificed his life. He had gone to the guillotine rather than reveal to the enemy the secret of the hiding-place in which the Count of Cherchemont, before his flight to England, had concealed his gold and jewels. Nevertheless, the Cherchemont family had always regarded this martyr to his duty with the most unjust suspicion. On her return to France the Countess, who had been left a widow, without hearing from her husband the secret of the treasure, was persuaded that Couderc had stolen it. The rapid fortune of his son—who in reality had made his money in business—only served to confirm her in her error. The memory of that calumny had come down from father to son with such intensity of bitterness that Michel, more than a century later, could not think of it without a thrill of anger.

And thus it came about that on that gusty October evening, one hundred and twenty years after the faithful servant's execution, the grandson of his grandson, in the silence of his study, was picturing to himself that

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scene of long ago—the guillotine set up in the market-place of Domfront, and the humble martyr mounting the scaffold.

"He would have done better," thought Michel, "had he gone campaigning with Michelot's troop, to sell his life dearly. Evidently he was a sort of philosopher, and not a man of action. One has only to look at his books to see that."

On a shelf of his bookcase Michel kept ten volumes which had belonged to Franquet, as testified the words scrawled, in a large, clumsy hand, on the fly-leaf of each book: "This belongs to me, François Couderc (Franquet), of Saint-Jean-de-Bois." One of these books was a Portable Dictionary of the French Language, with the pronunciation at the side of each word.

This last-mentioned work, published "in Paris, at the Principal Associated Libraries," was the book which the servant, desirous of self-improvement, had most frequently consulted, doubtless for the spelling. This book was also that which his descendant, the future professor, held in the greatest respect. The leather of the binding was so worn that he was almost afraid to handle the venerable volume—that witness to a pathetic effort for the attainment of a little culture.

Why was Michel's sympathy with his ancestor so intense on this particular night? He could not have told you. His desire for a more personal contact with the man triumphed over his habitual scruple. He placed the old dictionary on the table, and began mechanically to turn the leaves.

His fingers turned the pages, as his eyes scanned them, at random. So he came to the letter B. Just as he had absent-mindedly read the definition of the word "By"—"A great dike which dams a pond," and that of the word "Bysse"—"A valuable material of which certain garments are woven," he observed that the first word on the other side of the leaf was "Cadenas."

Surprised at this sudden jump from B to C, Michel glanced at the pagination. The words "By" and "Bysse" were the last on page 117; the word "Cadenas" headed page 120. Was this a typographical error? But to Michel, feeling the paper, it seemed that this leaf was thicker than the rest.

As he handled and rehandled the paper it felt loose under his touch, and further examination showed that two opposite pages had been carefully pasted together, but only at the edges. Holding up this doubled leaf in front of the lamp, he could distinguish a slip of paper enclosed between the two leaves. With the aid of a scrap of wadding dipped in water, he detached with great care the joined pages. The slip enclosed was thin and small. This also Michel carefully unfolded. Thereon, in ink, was traced a plan, representing two quadrilaterals. In the centre of one was written "First C."; the other was marked "2nd C." On one side of the second quadrilateral a tiny cross was traced. Before this cross the writer had put "9 p.," and above he had drawn an arrow, with the enigmatic terms "7 p." and "3 p. à g."

Quickly Michel turned back to the beginning of the book, and scanned the naive *ex-libris* on the fly-leaf: "*This belongs to me,*" and the rest. There was no doubt as to the identity of the handwriting. His great-great-grandfather it was who had enclosed this slip of paper, after tracing thereon this design, which was obviously a memorandum. To what did it refer? What had been his object? Had this plan anything to do with the hidden property of M. de Cherchemont? If so, Franquet had traced it in order to assist his memory, should that in any degree fail him. "First C.," "2nd C."—these words and letters would stand for "First" and "Second Cellar"; "9 p." and "7 p." would signify either nine and seven feet (*pieds*), or nine and seven stones (*pierres*). Could it be that this plan indicated the whereabouts of that missing treasure which, after first costing the faithful Franquet his life, would also have cost his descendants their honour had not the Cherchemonts, out of consideration for the hero's memory, refrained from publishing their suspicion? Was it indeed possible? And as the young man contemplated that mysterious design, those cabalistic formulæ, his excitement was so intense that the mere rustle of the paper between his fingers caused him to tremble all over. He was afraid.

Michel Couderc's life was a very simple one. His housekeeping was done by his concierge, who, every morning, brought up to him a roll and a jug of milk. He often dined upon a plateful bought at a cook-shop. But so disinterested was Michel that at first no thought of what this discovery might mean to him personally entered his mind.

Where were the Cherchemonts now? He only knew that of the present family there had been six children, all of whom except one died young. The one girl who was left was now a governess to the children of a Mme. Perrin, in Paris. At first he resolved to call and see her. But he let a week pass without pushing his inquiries farther.

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Why?

Because, during these seven days, a temptation, at first weak and wavering, had grown stronger and stronger in his mind. Supposing that the paper imprisoned by his great-great-grandfather were a true direction to the spot in which the Count had concealed his treasure; supposing, too, that he, Michel, went and found that treasure? Would not the fact of his doing so, after it had remained undisturbed for more than a century, give him the right to a possession of it? Article 2,279 of the Code says that in the case of movable goods possession gives a title. It limits to three years the period during which "he who has lost anything, or from whom anything has been stolen, can lay claim to it." Article 2,262 runs thus: "All lawsuits relating to property, real or personal, are limited to thirty years."

Thus mused Michel. Then he pictured to himself the contents of the treasure-box—diamonds, pearls, rubies, gold—much gold—a fortune!

"Ah!" he thought; "if only the box is still there?"

There was but one way in which to answer this question, and that was to go and see; to go to the château, to visit the cave, with his ancestor's plan in his hand.

Twelve days after his tremendous discovery Michel was putting up at an hotel of Domfront, and the same afternoon a vehicle conveyed him to Cherchemont.

"All the land has been cut up and divided," the landlord of the hotel told Michel. "Only the château is left, with a small portion of the park. M. Ignace Lankwitz lets it for the hunting season in the winter. He would gladly sell it. His life in Paris is a very expensive one, and he never comes here."

"Then why did he buy the place?"

"It was not he who bought it, but his father. He came here frequently at first. Afterwards, not often. Like all the gentry in the country, he grew sick of it, and began to sell off everything."

Michel hired a small, two-wheeled cart, with a seat for only one passenger. Perched up beside the driver, a tanned old ostler, with sly, blinking eyes, fallen-in, toothless mouth, and a complexion speaking of much cider-brandy, Michel plied this individual with questions, without, however, getting much out of him.

At length the driver drew up his mare in front of a barricaded gate, behind which Michel saw an imposing avenue of fir trees where cows were pasturing beneath the boughs. At the end of this avenue was a glimpse of the château.

"This is the ancient avenue," said the driver. "It is blocked up now, but I thought you might like to see this view. I will take you round to the other entrance."

"I will go this way," said the young man, "it will be less trouble. Wait for me here."

He leaped from the cart, and, after displacing a piece of wood, vaulted over the barrier. To reach the château by this avenue was his one chance of avoiding observation. If he were indeed to find the hiding-hole, it was of the utmost importance that no one should know of his visit.

As Michel approached the end of the avenue the outline of the château stood out more and more plainly. It was built of red brick, and had long, pepper-box roofs. A gigantic ivy tree clothed the edifice in a mantle of blackish green. The small-paned windows were provided with shutters of solid wood. A flight of a few steps denoted an entrance, a larger flight showed another. On one side was a great, tumble-down tower; another tower, square in shape, formed a pendant to it.

At the end of the avenue Michel encountered another barrier. On the other side of this was a road, broken up by the passage of heavy carts. Beyond the road there was a ditch, beyond the ditch a breast-high wall, and close to that a deserted garden, with clusters of untended rose-trees—and then the château!

A broken stone staircase led upwards to a terrace. Very cautiously, with eyes always on the watch, the young man ventured to ascend and tried to turn the latch of the door. It was locked. He tried another door, with the same result. Then he went towards the square tower. He observed that one of the air-holes was closed by a shutter of padlocked wood, which was fastened to the wall by hinges of metal corroded with rust. He reached it; he tugged at it. One of the hinges yielded, then the other. Impulsively he pressed upon the wood of the door with a stone inserted between the shutter and the wall. The door sprang open, and Michel was confronted by a hole.

Leaning over it and peering down, he thought he saw a paved floor. Hanging on to the door which he had forced, he let himself swing over the cavity, and then dropped. The depth was about ten feet. Fortunately Michel sustained no injury, but landed safely with his feet on the ground. He was in the basement of the château. Ten minutes

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later, without having to commit another act of housebreaking (for the keys were in all the doors), he had descended the steps leading to the cellar.

Here he began his investigations by lighting matches, one after the other, and taking a good look around. This cellar had unmistakably the form of a parallelogram, thus corresponding with his ancestor's plan. An opening in the ground gave access to the spot marked upon the plan as "2nd C."—that is, "Second Cellar." What a verification! At this moment Michel felt, thrilling through his whole being, that singular energy which we find at our service in the supreme moments of our lives.

He could not possibly explore these cellars by the light of matches, and his stock of them was now rapidly diminishing. Taking four stairs at a time, Michel went up the staircase leading to the rooms. As the château had been let furnished, it would certainly contain candlesticks, and in one of them at least there might still remain a candle, overlooked by some careless cleaner. His conjecture was correct. He came down again into the second cellar armed with a candle-end, which enabled him to see above his head an arch hewn out of the solid rock.

Calculating that three feet are about equal to one metre, and that each stride represents nearly a metre, he took three long steps. If the measurements given on the paper were correct, he was now ten feet below a certain point on the left where he must look for the hiding-hole.

Looking up, he saw nothing but the rudely-cut embossment of the stone. And how was he to reach this height? He looked around. There was nothing to help him. He went into the first cellar. There he saw a wooden crate, which someone had left there. This he dragged to that part of the wall which, as he thought, corresponded to the cross marked on the plan. At the risk of breaking a limb, he mounted upon this shaky support, clinging to the protuberances of the rock. He then observed that one of these projections seemed to be hollowed out from behind, in such a way that between it and the mass of rock there was an aperture through which an arm might pass. It will be remembered that Michel had been doubtful as to whether "3 p. à gauche" signified three *feet* (*pieds*) or three *stones* (*pierres*) to the left. He now perceived three of these projections, which had, in fact, the appearance of distinct individual stones. He descended from his pedestal and, after placing it beneath the third projection, mounted it again. He stretched out his arms and thrust a hand into the cavity. His fingers encountered some object which felt like metal. He grasped it, but so great was its weight that his vigorous effort to get it out of the hole put too severe a strain on the crate. The frail planks gave way, and he fell to the ground. His clothes were torn, his arm was bruised; but, in spite of the pain, he went again to the upper regions of the château to seek a more solid support. He brought down a table; it was too low. He went back, fetched a chair, placed it on the table, and stood on this erection. Again he grasped the hidden object, and this time succeeded in drawing it out. It was a leathern box, with brass mountings. So great was Michel's agitation that when he had possessed himself of this box and placed it on the table, he hastened to take down the chair and sit upon it. He was too weak to stand.

How long Michel remained in this condition, stupefied by excessive surprise, he never knew. All his actions of the last twenty-four hours had been prompted by his belief in the possibility of this discovery. Yet it would seem that he had not really believed in it! For here he was, gazing at this casket as a man who has won a big prize gazes at his lottery-ticket, asking himself if he is not dreaming.

Suddenly he drew himself up. The rising wind had banged a shutter against a window. The sound sent shivers down Michel's spine. He listened. The noise began again, accompanied this time by a grating sound which explained its cause. But suppose, thought Michel, that someone had entered during his operations in the cellar? He fancied he heard a footstep. Well, he could do nothing but crouch in his corner, and hope that the person who had entered the château would leave it without having seen him. He must wait.

But, then, his driver? To prolong his absence would involve another risk. The man would wonder, become uneasy, make inquiries at the farm. No! Better to venture all for all, and do his best to escape. And the casket? Why not replace that in its hole? It would be quite safe there. Even he, who knew the secret, could not, looking ever so attentively, distinguish from below a trace of that hollow space beneath the points of rock. He would go now; then he would hire the château, and remove the treasure at his leisure. There would be, of course, the risk that another person might

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"AGAIN HE GRASPED THE HIDDEN OBJECT, AND THIS TIME SUCCEEDED IN DRAWING IT OUT."


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discover the thing, and Michel, thinking of that, was seized with another fit of terror. An irresistible, covetous instinct awoke within him, causing him to snatch up the casket, as he said to himself, "Come what may, I *will* have it!"

He went up the steps. What a silence now in the château! He was in the basement, into which he had dropped. How, without a ladder, was he to reach the opening? He could not get out that way. He ascended more steps, then found himself on the ground floor. He opened a window, and, throwing out his burden in advance, leaped safely from a height of about twelve feet to the ground. Then he made his way by the grand avenue to the barrier, outside which the driver was still waiting with his cart.

By nine o'clock Michel was at home in the Rue Vanneau, and in front of him, on the table, lay the box. With the blade of a strong knife he forced the lock—and then! Diamonds were there, and rubies, pearls, emeralds, and several purses filled with gold. Here, actually here before him, where he could touch and handle it, was the little fortune of his dreams!

It is a fact well known to those who have experienced it that in a mental crisis the fever of excitement, when once the desired object is attained, is followed by a remarkable reaction of the whole being. Soon the open box, the scattered jewels, lay unheeded on the table. Michel Couderc, utterly exhausted, had thrown himself upon his bed. When he came in he had told the concierge to let him rest for a time. But, for all he knew, the woman might have come up and opened the door with her key. This possibility, however, did not occur to Michel before he lay down to sleep off his depression. He slept until five o'clock in the morning, when he awoke in a fright. Now he saw the risk. Might not someone have entered his room during his long spell of unconsciousness?

"Mère Françoise has not been up, but oh, how imprudent of me!"

"If she had come in here," he continued, as again he contemplated the jewels, "she must have seen these." He was fingering them now. "Have I any right to them?" he asked himself. "But who is there to call me to account? Who else could lay claim to them? How beautiful they are!"

He took up a magnificent necklace. That he might the better see the water of the pearls he spread them out upon both hands. "Who, I wonder," he mused, "wore you last, and when? Was it a victim of the Terror? Was it the lady of Cherchemont, who accused my great-grandfather?"

As Michel thus recalled the calumny which had caused so much suffering to his family he suddenly shuddered. He spent some minutes in serious reflection, fighting against a thought which he shrank from putting into words, yet to which he replied aloud:—

"No! it is not the same thing now."

The idea with which he was grappling was doubtless too painful to be dwelt upon, for he put back the necklace into the casket, which he locked up in a cupboard. Then he went out.

It was evening. Michel started off in the direction of the Latin Quarter, intending to dine with some acquaintances there. But he changed his mind. At the Odéon he stopped short, and then turned in the opposite direction, towards the wharves and the boulevards, as if to escape in the crowd from the voice of conscience, which told him incessantly:—

"Yes, it *is* the same thing! Those jewels, had Mme. de Cherchemont discovered them, would now be the jewels of Mlle. de Cherchemont. 'Limitation' is a legal term, a word of the Code. Honour recognizes no limitation. If your great-grandfather could come back from the grave, what would he call you? A thief! You are a thief if you keep that which is not yours."

To this another voice—a selfish, sophistical voice—thus replied:—

"You need not go to live in the country. You will be able to remain in Paris and go on with your studies. You will be independent. If you had not found this box, no one else would have suspected its existence. Mlle. de Cherchemont would never have touched a centime of this fortune. You will deprive her of nothing. Then, too, these people have been so unjust! Legally, they have lost the right to this money. Morally, they have even less right to it, because they treated so badly the widow of the man who had died for them. Keep the money—it is yours—yours—yours!"

Michel threaded his way through the ever-growing crowd of people who thronged the approach to the Opera House and the Grand Boulevards, seeing nothing, hearing nothing, until suddenly he stopped as though hypnotized. His uncertainty had given place to a fixed resolution. Entering a *café*, he asked for a directory. He knew that Mlle. de Cherchemont was a governess in the house of

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a lady named Perrin. There were ten Perrins in the directory. Michel made a note of their addresses and telephone numbers to inquire whether Mlle. de Cherchemont was there.

To his first three calls he received an answer in the negative; the name was not known. The fourth application was more fortunate. Mlle. de Cherchemont lived in the house. Not daring to ask formally for an interview, Michel merely inquired at what time he should have the best chance of seeing her. "At half-past one," was the reply. By way of burning his boats and interposing an irrevocable act between him and temptation, he did not quit the post-office until he had sent a telegram to Mlle. de Cherchemont, stating that he intended to call on her the next day in order to make a very important communication respecting a family secret. Bravely he signed the name which, he knew, would recall so much to her mind.

Mme. Perrin's house was in the Rue Boissière, in the upper part, which runs from the Avenue Kléber to the Place Victor Hugo. This distinctly modern building, of common and tasteless appearance, presented a sad contrast to the lonely, romantic, warmly-tinted château. If hitherto Michel Couderc had harboured any regret it vanished utterly when he beheld this house, when he thought of the girl's hard lot, and of the deliverance which he was bringing to her. A trifling incident served to quicken his already roused sympathy. The footman who answered his ring took him to the servants' staircase, that being considered good enough for a visitor to the governess. He was shown into the schoolroom on the third storey. In two minutes the aristocratic but impoverished lady to whom he had brought a fortune entered the room.

Claudine de Cherchemont was scarcely twenty-five years of age. She looked thirty. Her too large eyes, her pale face, her thin cheeks, her nervous, shrinking manner all told the same tale of premature griefs, daily trials, hard toil amid uncongenial surroundings; a painful remembrance of her parents' sufferings. Yet she carried her little head with pride. With her thick, fair hair arranged in heavy plaits, her thin, chiselled features, and the gravity of her expression, she resembled one of those statuettes which the artists of the later Middle Ages so loved. Michel succumbed to the charm to such an extent that in the presence of this grand-daughter of his great-grandfather's *seigneur* he felt as embarrassed as if he had been a culprit.

Mlle. de Cherchemont's dress was of some woollen material, iron-grey in colour, relieved in front by a ruffling of *mousseline de soie*, and at the wrists by white cuffs. The quiet tones made her beauty almost severe, though it was easy to believe that a little happiness would bring back the roses to those hollow cheeks and the smile to those sorrowful eyes.

"You have asked to speak to me," she said, as the young man kept silence, "and I have received you for the sake of the name you bear—a name associated in my mind with an heroic deed which has never been forgotten by us, whatever may have happened since."

"Since?" exclaimed Michel. "Nothing has happened since to sully that name, and the reason I asked to see you was that I might bring you the proof of what I say."

"You mentioned, or so I understood, a secret of my family," she said. "It has nothing, I presume, to do with yours?"

"It concerns both families. The honour of the Couderes is of as much importance as that of the Cherchemonts, when it comes to a question of honesty. My great-grandfather has been accused of appropriating the jewels and gold which M. de Cherchemont had concealed with the aid of François Couderc—called also Franquet—the hero to whom you have alluded. I have recovered that treasure."

"You—have—recovered it? You?"

"Yes, I."

Excitedly, he told Claudine of his discovery in the old dictionary; of his translation of the enigmatic plan; of his expedition to the château—and all the rest.

"I have no wish to make myself appear better than I am," he said. "Perhaps I should have kept this fortune but for the remembrance of my great-grandmother, who died of her grief for the suspicion cast upon her. Do not thank me. That which I have done I have done for her, and for her memory's sake."

"And I," said Claudine, with a tremble in her voice which betrayed her emotion, "I, in the name of my family, have to ask your pardon. I *do* ask it."

Then, after a silence, she inquired:—

"Where is this treasure now?"

"In my room," he replied. "I will bring the box to you here whenever you please."

"I should prefer," she said, after another silence, "that it should be returned directly to the person to whom it belongs."

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"YOU—HAVE—RECOVERED IT? YOU?"

"Are there, then, other Cherchemonts besides yourself?" questioned Michel. "I was told that you were the last of the name."

"I *am* the last," she said.

"Then——?"

"Then the lawful owner of this box is M. Lankwitz."

"The estate-agent? Because he has purchased the château? But——"

"The agreement says expressly: '*With*

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*all that it contains at the time of entering into possession.*' I remember my poor father pointing out this clause to my mother and me, and saying to us: 'You see, people still believe in the existence of that treasure.'"

"Then your father did not believe in it?"

"No."

"If he had done so, would he have sold the château?"

"The sale would have been necessary all the same, seeing that he had no means of discovering the hiding-place."

"But would he not have tried to insert a line, a word, reserving his rights?"

"Doubtless he would have *tried* to do so, but would he have succeeded?"

"You mean to say that this Lankwitz would have been more cunning than he? But I beg you to consider that if your father had known of the treasure he would not, at any rate, have allowed the deed to be drawn up exactly thus. That fact suffices for me; in my opinion the contract is not binding on you. The casket was hidden there, in 1793, by one who was at that time the head of your house. For whom? For the members of his family, that in the evil days they might reap the benefit of this provision. This treasure is recovered at last. You are the sole representative of his race. Should you refuse to accept this portion of your heritage which he so expressly reserved, you will fail in your duty to him. To one other, also. I am the great-grandson of the man who was guillotined for preserving this fortune to you. To him also you owe it that you should keep the treasure. You would not sacrifice it to a scruple which, I assure you, is quite imaginary, and that no one would understand?"

"What of yourself?" retorted the girl. "Someone might have said to you, 'This box has no longer a legal owner. It has been in that cavity a hundred and twenty years. But for an extraordinary chance, it would have remained there. The Cherchemonts believe it to be lost, and what legal right to it have they after a century or more? None. Why, then, go to Mlle. de Cherchemont?' 'My duty,' you would have replied. Very good. And *my* duty it is to honour the signature which my father placed at the foot of the deed of sale."

She spoke with strong feeling. Her face, losing the listless look due to the restraint and sadness of her life, kindled and became animated. At this moment she was beautiful, with a beauty which Michel had not at first observed, which, in fact, she had not possessed when she entered the schoolroom. And thus she renounced a fortune, in a place where the whole environment testified to the hard conditions of her lot. There was the blackboard whereon one of her little pupils had traced in chalk the figures of a multiplication sum—the large writing-table, with the three chairs for teacher and pupils—the shelves filled with school-books—another still larger table for games, on which stood a miniature kitchen and a doll's house. Against the wall were gymnastic appliances and diminutive dumb-bells. The young man had a mental vision of this high-born girl, superintending the studies and recreations of the Perrin children, heirs to the manufacturer's millions.

Above all, he was a young man on the point of falling in love. He loved, indeed, already, though he was unconscious of the fact, and did not dream of the important place that Claudine was taking in his life. Her eyes of deepest blue, her quivering smile, her oval face, her refined movements, and that inexpressible charm of strangely-blended pride and fragility, energy and womanliness, which radiated from her whole person, had captured Michel's heart.

"Take time for reflection," he said. "There is no hurry."

"I have reflected sufficiently," replied Claudine. "I dare not put my own construction upon the text of a contract accepted by one of my dear dead ones. Ah!" she continued, in an almost grieved tone, "I cannot understand, sir, why you should play the part of a tempter. You might know that if I have chosen to follow a profession which renders me independent, it is because I have very decided views as to honesty in money matters. I have chosen not to live on charity, and certainly I will not live on money for the possession of which I should reproach myself day and night. '*The château with all that it contains at the time of entering into possession.*' However you may turn and twist this clause, you can make it mean but one thing, which even a child would understand. If you would retain the esteem in which I hold you because of what you have done, do not advise me to do a base and cowardly thing. Tell me that I am right, or I shall believe——"

"What shall you believe?" asked Michel, as she hesitated.

"Nothing, nothing!" she said, passing her hands over her eyes. "If you were not an honest man, you would not be here. You would have kept the treasure for yourself." Her tone changed. It became authoritative.

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"Besides, if you really are of opinion that the box belongs to me, you will, of course, recognize my right to dispose of it as I please. Bring it to me this very day; I will myself take it to M. Lankwitz. It will be a hard thing for me to meet the man whose father robbed mine. He had the château and the land for the half of their value. But we must not put it off. It will only be a painful quarter of an hour, and what is that in comparison with the remorse of a lifetime? When can you bring me the box?"

"*I* will take it to M. Lankwitz to-day," said Michel, after a moment's silence. "Pardon me for what I have said."

"At last!" she exclaimed, all in a glow. "Oh, how good you are! And how grateful I am to you. Yes," she added, with a little shake of the head, "I would have done it, but it would have been very, very hard. And now, leave me. It is two o'clock, and my pupils are waiting for me."

Ignace Lankwitz was in a very bad temper at the moment when his valet brought to him Michel Couderc's card, on which the latter had written simply: "On important business concerning Cherchemont." Ninette de Grandpré, the little actress of the Vaudeville who helped Ignace to squander the ill-gotten millions of the estate-agent, had just quarrelled with him because he had refused to pay her furrier's bill, which certainly amounted to a most unreasonable sum. He had recently incurred heavy losses at play, and on the previous evening had lost thirty thousand francs in a gaming-house. He had finished up with a supper, where he imbibed such a quantity of cocktails that, oppressed with the resulting headache, he was now reposing, contrary to his usual custom, at four o'clock in the afternoon.

His present position resembled that of a shipwrecked man on a raft, followed by a shark. He was in love, too, with Ninette; or, rather, it flattered his vanity to be seen with her at various places of amusement in Paris. The mere sight of such a dull and stupid person, with his little, fat body squeezed into a jacket of the very latest fashion, his plump feet thrust into dainty, highly-polished boots, with light cloth tops, his thick, stumpy fingers, loaded with rings, his scanty black hair, sticky-looking as if varnished, spread out upon his prematurely bald crown—the mere appearance of him told plainly that this leering brute was one of those gay dogs whom a woman of a certain type leads after her like a poodle on a string.

We have now sufficiently explained the keen interest with which, in spite of—or perhaps because of—his headache and his worries, the half-ruined lover of Ninette was prepared to receive his unknown visitor.

"'Important business concerning Cherchemont.' How I wish I could get rid of that old barrack!"

Such was the remark uttered under his breath as Michel Couderc entered the smoking-room. Through the smoke of the lighted cigarette which he held in his hand Ignace, thus posing a little, yet at the same time really rather nervous, scanned the newcomer.

Michel carried the bag which had accompanied him to and from Cherchemont; this, as soon as the door was closed, he put down on the carpet. He looked more like some humble clerk than a possible purchaser of the château. The other man was surprised and disappointed.

"This fellow," he thought, "has not come either to buy or to hire the place. What brings him here, I wonder? I must be cautious."

The bloated mask of Ignace took on an expression of cold haughtiness, which, however, could not hold its own against the amazement of its wearer at his visitor's marvellous story. He allowed his cigarette to go out. He sat up in his reclining-chair. His face became animated even to passion as Michel related the episodes of his fantastic expedition, and, finally, told of his interview that afternoon with Mlle. de Cherchemont and the mission wherewith she had charged him.

"Here is the casket," he concluded, taking from his bag the leathern box, which he had secured with a cord, so that it should not fall open. "You will see that Mlle. de Cherchemont renounces, in your favour, a large fortune."

What did Michel hope for in saying these words? That Lankwitz also might prove capable of a generous action? That he would say, "But this box belongs to her"? If Michel had cherished any such hope, the greedy gleam in the eyes of the man contemplating the jewels speedily disillusioned him, to say nothing of the trembling fingers, which had suddenly become crooked for the handling of the diamonds, pearls, and golden coins. Michel heard Lankwitz babble, almost choking in his emotion, the phrases of the gambler intoxicated with gain.

"Good luck this time, and no mistake! My luck has turned at last! What pearls!

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"GOOD LUCK THIS TIME, AND NO MISTAKE! MY LUCK HAS TURNED AT LAST."

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My father had heard of this treasure. He did not believe in it, but all the same he took care to be on the safe side and to have it expressly stated in the document relating to the sale that he bought the château with all that it might be found to contain. Everybody might not have behaved so well as Mlle. de Cherchemont. I will call and thank her. You, too, have behaved very well. For, after all, you might have kept the jewels. It is true that you would have found some difficulty in selling them, without accounting for your possession of them——"

He paused for a moment; then, looking queerly at Michel, he said:—

"There was no inventory in the box, then?"

"None," replied Michel, who felt himself redden as he perceived the insult of the question.

"That is strange," remarked Lankwitz.

"What do you mean?" demanded the other man, with a quiver of anger in his voice.

"Oh, nothing, M. Couderc, nothing!" was the reply, and Lankwitz at once went on to aggravate his offence by tactless excuse. "Indeed, I cannot suspect you, when you have given me such a striking proof of your honesty. Only," he continued, with an uncertain, apologetic smile—"only—you do not put in a claim for half the treasure. Whenever my father alluded to the possibility of its being found, he always said that the law rightly gives the half of a discovered treasure to its discoverer, but *only if no one can prove a right to the property*. That is the text of the Code. I have told you of the clause in the deed of purchase. And so——"

"Have I claimed anything of you, sir?"

"Well, keep your temper. We are talking business. Am I angry because you broke into my château? It *was* housebreaking, you know!" He laughed aloud this time, to cover his embarrassment. "It was a very fortunate thing for me that you *did* break in. Otherwise—— Oh, what pearls!" He was again fingering the jewels. "What a marvel this ruby is! And this emerald! But it is too heavily mounted; that is its one fault. Nowadays we know how to treat precious stones—to set them off to the best advantage."

He closed the box as he continued:—

"You tell me that Mlle. de Cherchemont is in poor circumstances. If some notes—— And yourself—you must have incurred expenses."

"Mlle. de Cherchemont will accept nothing, and I advise you to make no such offer. I should certainly decline to convey it to her. As for myself, I am not yet too poor to travel to Domfront and back at my own expense. I have accomplished my errand. Good day."

"You are still angry? Well, then, we will say no more about it. Once more I thank you!"

Ignace Lankwitz held out a hand which Michel Couderc pretended not to see. He buckled up his bag; then, with the slightest possible inclination of the head, quitted the smoking-room. Not so hastily, however, as not to hear the possessor of the box muttering between his teeth: "All the same, it's a strange thing that there should have been no inventory."

"Now confess that life is a sorry farce," Michel said to Claudine the following morning, after describing to her the ludicrous and yet mortifying details of his visit to Lankwitz. "When I think that your great-grandfather fled from his country in peril of his life, and that mine went to the scaffold rather than break the solemn promise made to his master, with the result that you are governess to the young Perrins, and that I am labouring at my thesis in order to procure a modest professorship, while the wealth preserved by those two passes into the hands of this base-born and ungrateful rake—I ask you what good end has been served by the heroism of those two men?"

"I will tell you," replied Claudine, "what end this heroism has served. *It has made us feel as we feel now!*"

In pronouncing these words the young woman flashed proud eyes upon the young man. In those eyes might be seen the dawn of an emotion like that which had been stirring in himself since the previous day. Already each held the other in an affectionate esteem which bordered upon a deeper feeling. Before he left her he took her hand, saying, timidly:—

"Will you permit me to see you again?"

"Yes," she replied, simply.

"Often?"

"Often."

Those two syllables sufficed to send Michel Couderc back to his own quarters elate, joyous, as if under the spell of an enchantment. Alone in his room, he gazed upon the dictionary on his bookshelf, the book in which that revealing paper had so long reposed. He took it down reverently, and pressed his lips upon the frail leather, as he said, aloud:—

"I thank you, my dear great-grandfather, I thank you!"

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# SOVEREIGNS AS THEY ARE.

By H.R.H.

# The Infanta Eulalia of Spain.

II.

# THE SCANDINAVIAN COURTS.

## The Sovereigns of Norway.

"I AM so glad that I am Queen of a country in which everybody loves simplicity."

This was the testimony to the charm of Norway which Queen Maud gave me, when I saw her in her little home near Christiania last autumn. She spoke with enthusiasm of her adopted country, and I was not in the least surprised, for Norway is undoubtedly the happiest and most progressive country in Europe. Indeed, if anybody wants to know what life will be like in the good time that is coming, when Capitalism will be dead and Democracy triumphant on both sides of the Atlantic, let him go to Norway and study its institutions and the life of its people.

"When I am at Lourdes," said a devout Catholic, "I do not believe—I know." And when I was in Norway I did not need to make an act of faith in Democracy, as I must in Paris or New York or London; I saw for myself that a nation is happier when its life is based on democratic principles.

"How deadly dull!" said a fashionable woman to me, when I told her of the simplicity of life in Christiania. "Surely your Royal Highness does not want to eliminate the colour and brilliancy of life!"

She had never realized that the glitter and magnificence of society in great capitals can only exist against a background of misery and starvation. Norway is not a wealthy country, and it does not afford capitalists opportunities for piling up fortunes. Nobody is very rich, and everybody appears to have a sufficiency. The cosmopolitan plutocrats, who corrupt the society of Western Europe, would be wretched there, and, in point of fact, they avoid a country in which they are perfectly well aware they would be unable to display their wealth. And if the citizens of Christiania are deprived of the sight of millionaires darting about the town in illuminated motor-cars, with jewelled wives and daughters, they are compensated for the loss by the knowledge that, thanks to the equitable distribution of such wealth as the country possesses, crime and robbery are practically unknown. Education and common sense have broken down the barriers of pride of purse and pride of rank, which separate man and man in other countries, and the King himself is simply the first among equals.

King Haakon's fine figure and handsome face make him look the part he has to play. He is a man of great tact and kindliness, and has the simple tastes characteristic of the Danish Royal Family. To these advantages the King adds the supreme one of having a clever Queen, who helps him wisely and loyally in his work. Their son, little Prince Olaf, is utterly charming and, in spite of being an only child, not the least spoilt.

I had not seen Queen Maud in her kingdom until I went to Norway last autumn, and I wondered whether her rise from the rank of mere Royal Highness to that of a Majesty would have altered or spoilt her. She was staying at a little château near Christiania


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when I arrived in the city, and she asked me to come out and have luncheon with her. When a Royal carriage arrived at my hotel to take me to the country, and I noticed that the servants wore plain dark liveries, instead of the regal scarlet, I began to feel that the charming Maud had not changed. Half an hour's drive brought me to the château, and as the Queen welcomed me I felt ashamed of the suspicions I had entertained, and realized that she remains the same simple and unaffected girl I used to know in England.

"I'm so glad you've come," she said, and as she spoke I heard in her voice and saw in her manner the charm she has inherited from her mother, Queen Alexandra.

The château was a small house of one storey, standing in a public park. A plot of ground has been railed off round the house, so that the King and Queen may have a garden in which they can enjoy privacy. Not that they are annoyed, like most kings and queens, with demonstrative manifestations of loyalty. The Norwegians contrive to make life agreeable for the Royal Family by allowing them to go about the country-side, or through the streets of the capital, as freely as ordinary citizens. Queen Maud revels in her new liberty.

"I find it so nice to be able to go out shopping without any fuss," she said, and told me that she could go into a shop in Christiania without anybody taking any notice of her, buy what she wants, and leave with her parcels tucked under her arm to walk back to the palace.

I could understand her delight better than most people, for in Madrid I have experienced the misery of knowing that I cannot get in or out of a carriage without attracting a small crowd. To find oneself perpetually a public show is beyond words exasperating.

Queen Maud's Court consists of two ladies-in-waiting and a Grand Mistress, a suite which is no larger than that of the least important of the numerous Austrian Archduchesses. And, moreover, these ladies do not make deferential curtsies to Her Majesty. The Queen shakes hands with them when she meets them, and treats them, not as glorified servants, but as friends. The point may appear trivial, but it is worth mentioning, for it shows with what tact a Princess, accustomed to the etiquette and the splendour of the English Court, has adapted herself to the spirit of a democratic people.

"You were perfectly right," she said to me, "in what you used to tell me about the happiness of simplicity."

"Of course I was right," I said, "and I do not believe you would care to go back to the old Court life."

"I am much happier in this life," she said; and then it was that she told me how glad she was to be Queen of a country in which everybody loves simplicity.

It was obvious to me that both the King and Queen adore the fascinating little Olaf, but I noticed that he has been very well brought up and is very obedient. He is being educated with Norwegian boys of his own age and leads a healthy out-of-door life.

"I want you to see Olaf driving the motor-car his grandmother has sent him," said the Queen; and Queen Alexandra's present, the tiniest and most dainty little car imaginable, was brought round to the door of the château. The little Prince made a splendid chauffeur, and evidently thoroughly enjoyed rushing round the park in his car.

I left the château feeling that I had had a glimpse of ideal family life, and thoroughly convinced that the democratic Norwegian Court is the nicest in Europe.

I do not in the least mind confessing that when I advocate democratic principles I have the interests of the Royal personages at heart as well as those of their peoples. There are plenty of Princes and Princesses, bound hand and foot by etiquette and galling restrictions, who, whatever their present views may be, will welcome the liberty Democracy will bring them. Happy King Haakon and Queen Maud! Although they are addressed as Your Majesties, they are allowed to live in a tiny red bungalow, up in the mountains at Holm Kelm, when winter comes, and there they and Prince Olaf dart about on skis, talking to everybody, making everyone happy, happy themselves in being three Norwegian citizens.

And beyond the circle of the Court the constitution of Norwegian society is utterly different from that of society in the most powerful European countries. Both the law and society regard woman as in every respect the equal of man. Women have the same civic rights as men, and use them. At the last parliamentary elections, in 1913, seventy-five per cent. of the women of the towns who had the right to vote used it; indeed, the proportion of women who did their duty as citizens and recorded their votes was higher than that of men. All the higher professions are open to women, and at the present time the most important of the professors at the University is a woman, and the leading lawyer connected with the supreme tribunal

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"KING HAAKON'S FINE FIGURE AND HANDSOME FACE MAKE HIM LOOK THE PART HE HAS TO PLAY."
*Photo. by Anderson.*

is also a woman. The Norwegians refuse to tolerate cheap female labour; if a woman does the same work as a man she gets the same pay. Society is equally just. It does not apply one standard of morals to man and another to woman. Both are judged by the same standard.

The happy relations existing between the men and women of Norway are, I am convinced, largely due to the fact that they are educated together at school and in the University. The equality of male and female students at the University seems to be symbolized by the wearing of identical caps of the same gay colours. From childhood they grow up together and become good comrades, understanding each other thoroughly and without *arrière pensée*, having the same moral code and the same views of life. In most countries boys and girls are segregated apart and only allowed to meet under the supervision of their elders. The system is not a good one. Indeed, I have often thought that nothing gives a girl's brain such a wrong twist as the false view instilled into her at school about the companionship of men. Why perpetually dread man?



QUEEN MAUD WITH PRINCE OLAF.
*Photo. by W. & D. Downey.*

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# The Sovereigns of Sweden.

THE separation of Norway and Sweden was due to the desire of the Norwegians, whose merchant fleet is twice the size of the Swedish, to have their commercial interests abroad properly looked after by an independent consular service. This was the formal cause of separation, but undoubtedly the marked difference between the social organization of the two countries facilitated the loosing of the bonds that held them together. Sweden still has an aristocracy, and the nobles who sit in the Upper House of the Swedish Parliament are able to check in some degree the advance of Democracy. Yet in their love of simplicity the two nations are alike. This was made clear to me in rather an amusing way soon after my arrival in Stockholm during my autumn tour. I was going to the theatre with a friend, and when she arrived to fetch me I was getting into an evening gown.

"Is your Royal Highness going to wear a low dress?" she said, in a manner that made me feel I was doing something thoroughly unconventional.

"Oughtn't I to?" I asked.

"We do not go in evening dress to the theatre," she said.

"Then what am I to wear?" I asked.

"Just a skirt and blouse," she said.

And accordingly in a skirt and blouse I went. It was rather a pretty blouse—I confess that I love pretty things—and when I got into the theatre I felt just a trifle over-dressed.

"What sensible people you Swedish women are!" I said to my friend, when I looked round the theatre and saw how simply the women were dressed. "You save hours and hours which women in London and Paris fritter away at their toilet-tables."

The Court of Sweden is characterized by Scandinavian simplicity, although this is not so strongly marked as at the ideal Court of King Hackon and Queen Maud. The Queen of Sweden's health is too bad to allow her to appear in public, and her mother-in-law, Queen Sophie, lives in a retirement dictated by her advanced age and personal tastes. Hence the principal figure at Court, apart from the King, is the Crown Princess, before her marriage Princess Margaret of Connaught, and she has contrived to give it just a touch of the elegance of the Court of St. James. I lunched with her when I was in Stockholm, and she told me how much she loves her Swedish life. Her marriage is a very happy one and in striking contrast to that of Prince William, whose wife has deserted him to amuse



KING GUSTAV OF SWEDEN, WHO HAS INHERITED FROM HIS FATHER A GREAT CHARM OF MANNER.

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THE QUEEN OF SWEDEN.

herself in Paris. An attempt has been most unjustly made to place the blame for this escapade on the Prince. As a matter of fact, he is a charming boy and did his utmost to make his wife happy in Sweden. King Gustav has inherited from his father a great charm of manner and a fine figure, which devotion to tennis helps him to keep. He is fond of all sorts of sport and is an excellent shot.



THE CROWN PRINCESS OF SWEDEN, WHO IS STILL BETTER KNOWN TO US AS PRINCESS MARGARET OF CONNAUGHT.
*Photo. by Swaine.*



THE CROWN PRINCE OF SWEDEN.
*Photo. by Swaine.*

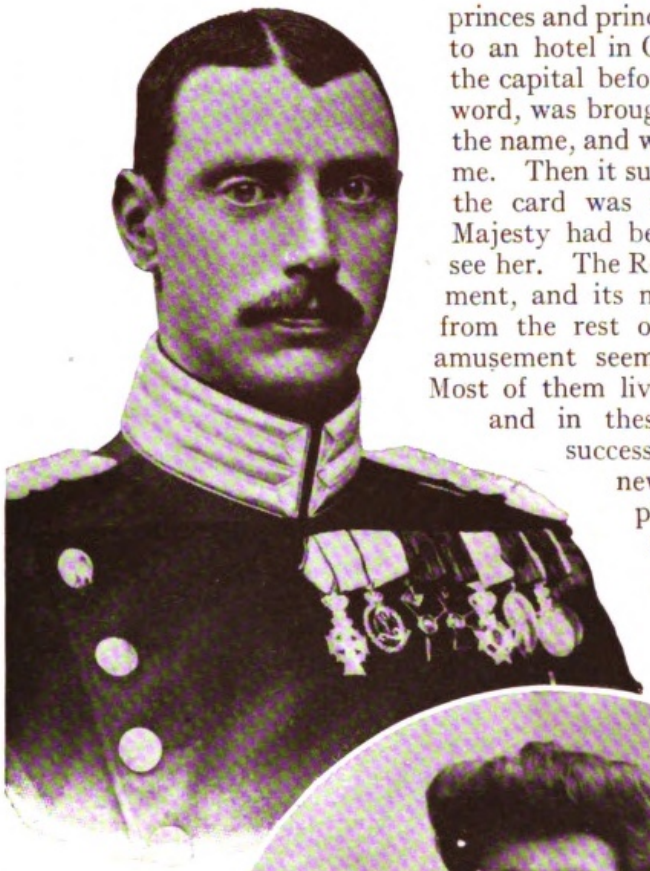
I used to see a good deal of the late King Oscar. His French ancestry and his personal charm made him very popular in France, a country he loved, and during his numerous visits to Paris I had the opportunity of getting to know him well, and I became very fond of him. I was in Sweden in 1897, travelling incognita, and I remember sitting down to rest one day within sight of Sophie Rue, King Oscar's Norman villa, and as I looked at the peaceful home of my old friend, I hoped that his last years would not be embittered by the dissolution of the union between Sweden and Norway. But the blow came to the "poet King," whose spirit seemed to live above the dull realities of life, and it came when he was old and broken down with the illness which at last caused his death. Kings must yield to the imperious will of Democracy, and I look forward to the time when Sweden will have the advantages enjoyed by her sister kingdom.

## The Sovereigns of Denmark.

I VISITED Denmark, as well as Norway and Sweden, last autumn, and there also I remarked the growth of democratic ideas. It is a peaceful country, and the souls of the people seem as clear as their blue eyes. The Danes are a kind, industrious, and simple race, and if they strike one as being less hardy and vigorous than the other Scandinavian races, they certainly have the same courteous manners as the Swedes and Norwegians.

The first time that I visited Denmark, King Christian, the father of Queen Alexandra and the Empress Marie, was reigning, and the castle in which his large family used to assemble for those reunions which he loved was looked on by the Danes with a sort of reverence. But I remember that once, when I was travelling incognita, I drove past the castle in a cab, and the friendly driver, anxious to oblige a tourist, told me that a great

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THE KING OF DENMARK.



THE QUEEN OF DENMARK.

family gathering was taking place there. He reeled off the names of the world-famous personages who had gathered round the King, and he did so with as much indifference as a London cabman displayed when he pointed out Mme. Tussaud's to me the first time I was in London, and casually explained that wax figures were kept there. The attitude of the Danish cabman towards the Royal Family, which seemed to me curious years ago, appears to be that of most Danes at the present time. They have ceased to take any particular interest in the doings of their Sovereign and his relations. Nothing strikes me more, as I go about Europe, than the fact that, if I may be allowed the expression, the market value of princes and princesses has enormously decreased. I went to an hotel in Copenhagen, and I had not been long in the capital before a card, inscribed with a single Danish word, was brought to me. I stared at it, not recognizing the name, and wondering who it was who had been to see me. Then it suddenly dawned on me that the word on the card was simply the Danish for "queen." Her Majesty had been to see me, and of course I went to see her. The Royal Family appears now to live in retirement, and its members form a small caste, penned off from the rest of mankind by their rank. Their chief amusement seems to be paying calls on each other. Most of them live at their country villas and châteaux, and in these pleasant homes there is a constant succession of cousinly meetings, when family news is exchanged, and while the children play the elders take a stroll in the park surrounding the house at which the family gathering is taking place. The King displays that peculiar form of wit which I have often noticed is characteristic of crowned heads who have lived much in retirement. With them the gaiety of childhood seems, with the passing of the years, to turn into a curious spirit of mockery. Trifles create



THE LATE KING CHRISTIAN OF DENMARK.
*Photo. by Elfelt.*

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shouts of laughter, enlivening the family reunion and confusing those who are unacquainted with the type of witticisms which goes down in Royal circles.

And beyond the tranquil enclosures of the Royal parks the Danish people is moving surely and steadily towards a broader and more democratic life than it has hitherto enjoyed. And women are in the forefront of the movement. The Danish women are perhaps the most fascinating of the women of Scandinavia. Many of them are beautiful, and although they refuse to be slaves of fashion, they display a certain charming coquetry in their dress. Numbers of them earn their own livings, and are thus independent of men. This is the sure road for women to take if they desire to have the same rights and privileges as man. As it is, the Danish woman has established for herself a position which her Latin sisters may well envy, and the law secures her independence. She will, I am convinced, be given electoral rights, and she will have no need to resort to militant methods to obtain them.

On the road between Copenhagen and Helsingor a milk-white villa stands out against the faint blue background of the northern sky. There it was that I passed the happiest moments of my stay in Denmark, and there I found at last two crowned heads who had remained human in spite of the crushing weight of the crowns they have worn for so many years. The Italian villa is the home of Queen Alexandra and the Empress Marie, and the two sisters, who adore each other, are absolutely happy in each other's society, and in the simplicity of the life they lead. They welcomed me with enthusiasm, kissed me, and were quite excited to have somebody to whom they could show their little house. In the sitting-room they share they both wanted to show me their special corners at the same time.

"Come and see my writing-table," said the Empress, pulling me to her end of the room.

"No," cried Queen Alexandra, gaily, pulling me in the opposite direction. "Come and see *my* writing-table."

How we all laughed!

"This is my chair," said the Empress, showing me one in her corner of the room.

"And this is my chair," echoed the Queen, calling my attention to the favourite chair in her corner.

I had to see everything and admire everything. The two sisters were particularly proud of their kitchen-garden, and seemed to be delighted to find that I knew something about growing vegetables. I have a kitchen-garden of my own in Normandy, where I have a little house, and we were able to compare notes.

And after we had inspected flowers and vegetables, we went through an underground passage, which their Majesties have had cut beneath the road that divides the garden of the villa from the sea, and I found myself in a little Norwegian cottage by the seashore, a tiny stretch of which has been walled off, so that the Empress and the Queen may enjoy it undisturbed. When we were inside the cottage the Empress offered me a thin Russian cigarette and lit one herself. Then Queen Alexandra showed me their tea-kettle and the little kitchen in which they make their own cakes and brew their own tea.

"This is where I make my tea," cried the Queen.

"And this is where I cut the bread and butter," said the Empress.

They were as happy as two schoolgirls, revelling in the simple life of a home where they can live like two ordinary women, untrammelled by Court etiquette, and without even a single lady-in-waiting to attend them.

After visiting the Norwegian cottage, I had to see a new marvel. We went down to the beach, and the two sisters explained to me that it was a splendid place for picking up bits of amber. I had seen so much amber in the Castle of Rosenberg and in the shops of Copenhagen that it seemed improbable that there could be any more in the Baltic. Nevertheless, there appears to be plenty left; for both the Empress and the Queen showed me the boxes in which they store the treasure they find on the shore. The Empress is luckier in finding amber than the Queen, and her box contained more than her sister's.

"It is most unfair," said the Queen, gaily.

"I always pick up more than you do," said the Empress, triumphantly.

We searched for amber until it was time to go, and we enjoyed ourselves like children.

Both the Empress and the Queen have played the great parts they have had to fill on the stage of life with dignity and distinction; but they are Danes, and they have never lost the love of simplicity which is the most notable characteristic of the people of Scandinavia. Now that they can live their lives as they like, they deliberately leave their palaces and spend a great part of their time more simply than many commoners. To see their happiness made me happier myself, and, indeed, my tour in Scandinavia has given me new courage.

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# A NIGHT of the BATH

By Frederick Lewis Allen

Illustrated By Treyer Evans

STAGG looked long and carefully at the house, while the autumnal night wind whipped his thin trousers and chilled his tired legs. Yes, of course this was the Craigvilles' house; he recognized its sharp gable-roof against the star-powdered sky, as well as its broad veranda. Yet there hung in his mind a troublesome doubt. At six o'clock that September evening he had arrived in Devonshire for the first time in his life, and had been taken to his sister's house. Almost immediately after dinner he had rushed off alone to an informal dance that his sister recommended, intending to stay only an hour or two. But at nine-thirty he had met the fascinating Miss Seton; at ten he had succumbed to her attractions; at ten-thirty he had dismissed his sister's car with the statement that he would walk home; from ten-thirty till twelve, when Miss Seton left, he had thought of nothing but her.

"Good-bye, Miss Seton," he had said as they lingered by the door after their last dance together. "I shall never forget this. I pray Heaven that we shall meet again."

Then the door had closed, and Stagg, feeling that the dance would now be only inexpressibly dreary, had before long found himself, like the ploughman, plodding wearily homeward. The wind had gained tremendously in force. Not till now had he realized the disadvantage of being on foot, without a chauffeur to direct him. He was damp from much dancing, eager to get to bed, and uncertain just where the latter was to be found.

But Stagg was not a man to worry about trifles.

"Pooh!" he said to himself, "of course it's the right house." At any rate, he thought, his key would answer the question. Stagg felt in the dampish pocket of his trousers for the key.

In the next instant he was wondering how comfortable it would be to spend the small hours in gradual refrigeration in the veranda hammock. For his pocket contained eighteenpence, a box of cigarettes, and a button.

He searched all his pockets twice, and found other useful and ornamental objects, but the key to his sister's house and to the situation was not there. He was locked out in the cold.

Now, ordinarily, when you are locked out, you throw pebbles at the windows until somebody in a wrapper and a state of embarrassment comes down, opens the door, and immediately runs for cover as if he or she had just touched off a rocket. But Stagg was temporarily in his sister's good graces, and did not like to throw away this advantage by making night hideous; furthermore, there remained a fearful chance that this wasn't his sister's house at all. He realized perfectly that when a householder is awakened by an utter stranger on the front lawn who says he has no key, the information seems hardly pertinent to the householder.

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"No," argued Stagg, "this is the time for caution and agility." He liked to be thought of as a man for whom a key was unnecessary; and perhaps he pictured himself as pausing, the next morning, at breakfast, to remark: "Oh, by the way, I lost that key last night. Sorry. No trouble at all, thanks. You were so careless as to leave an upper window open." Yes, he would climb into the house somehow.

So he gently tried, one after another, the first-storey windows, the cellar-flap, and the back door. He felt extremely resourceful. Finally he took off his hat, coat, and dancing-pumps, and, leaving them in an inconspicuous corner, clambered up a wistaria-trellis in a manner worthy of his remoter ancestors, and wriggled up to the veranda roof. Here he stopped to pull the cobwebs out of his hair, while the keen night air struck bitterly through his damp shirt.

Gripping the tiles with his toes, Stagg snorted violently, and then emitted a heart-rending groan.

"Good gracious!" thought Stagg. "Is he going to wake up?"

And at the same moment he remembered a chance remark of his sister's. "Yes," she had then said, "Jack always keeps a revolver in our room." In a panic Stagg flattened himself against the wall, wishing that the recollection had occurred to him a little earlier. There was silence now, except for a great wind in the trees. Was the snorer rising quietly and stalking towards the window, weapon in hand, or was he lying awake, with every sense alert, while his fingers tightened on the cold steel under his pillow? Stagg decided not to hurry on. For a long, breezy minute he clung to the wall, straining his ears to catch the least sound. At last the rhythmical snoring began again. Feeling as if he had received a death-cell pardon, Stagg stole on to the next window and listened.



"HE SAW A HUMAN FIGURE, GHOSTLY IN THE STARLIGHT, AGAINST THE WALL."

now crept on all fours up to the black square of the nearest window. It stood open, but a screen prevented him from inserting his head. Stagg listened, and presently he heard a gentle snoring within, and a drowsy sigh between the snores. He turned to move on towards the next window, but as he did so his foot slipped and his knee hit the tiles with a bang. The sleeper

Meanwhile Stagg's brother-in-law, Jack Craigville, waking from a light slumber, happened to glance out of his bedroom window at the Rectory, which adjoined his own cottage. As he did so his jaw dropped. He asked himself two or three times in rapid succession whether he was dreaming, leaped out of bed, and moved to the window for a better look. Distinctly he saw a long human

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figure, ghostly in the starlight, against the wall between the first-storey windows of the next house, the quaint little gabled Rectory.

"What is it, Jack?" queried his wife, sleepily.

"A burglar entering the Rectory," replied Craigville. "Watch him. I shall telephone for the police."

For two weeks the little town had been infected with a burglar panic. Several large residences had been entered, and keen-nosed detectives, while confessing themselves mystified, hinted that the criminal might be found among the residents themselves. Craigville exulted: the mystery was now solved; the detectives were proved right, for here was the housebreaker himself, unmistakably. Thinking of the hundred pounds reward offered by Mrs. Penhallow for the return of the Penhallow pearls, Craigville joyfully called up the police. The latter replied that he would come over and bring his son.

"Has he moved?" Craigville asked his wife, breathlessly.

"Not an inch. Oh, Jack, promise me you won't do anything rash!"

But Craigville was already slipping on his trousers.

"Think of the reward, dear," he said. "We'll surround the house and corner the burglar in no time."

As Craigville uttered these words, his brother-in-law, having heard no sound at the first-floor window of the Rectory, was in the act of entering. He pushed his head through. A familiar smell of soap and damp towels met him half-way. He thrust one leg in, struck something slippery, and fell with a dull, booming sound into a porcelain receptacle, fortunately empty.



"HE WAS HORRIFIED TO HEAR A BLOOD-CURDLING FEMININE SHRIEK FROM THE BED."

"The bath!" he muttered. "Comparative safety. Now I can proceed to my room."

Groping for the door, he emerged into the blackness of the hall.

The stars, filtering through a grey square of skylight overhead, gleamed feebly on the banisters. To Stagg's normally unobservant eyes, the place, in so far as he could see it, looked familiar. Step by step he made his silent way to the next storey, and finally his hand reached the knob of what he felt must be his own door. Cautiously he turned the knob.

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The night, as I have vaguely intimated, was one in which the wind rocks the trees and upsets the veranda furniture and knocks over the flower-vases. This particular room was on the east side of the house; the wind was from the west. The inevitable happened. The moment Stagg released the door-handle the door was torn from his grasp by a wild gust of cold air, and crashed against the bedroom wall. Stagg plunged after it, came up unexpectedly and with some force against an iron bedstead, and was horrified to hear a blood-curdling feminine shriek from the bed.

He did not take long to realize his mistake. In one second he had regained the doorway; in two seconds he had reached the stairs, moving with that quick, sliding walk peculiar to those trying to hurry in the dark; in four seconds he had descended the full flight to the next floor, assisted by the force of gravity, which took entire charge of his progress after his foot slipped on the third step. In six seconds he had collected the fragments of himself at the foot of the stairs, found the bathroom door, slunk inside, and locked it.

Here he stood, panting, until he assured himself that he had not left behind any arms or legs in that terrific descent. Again he found himself murmuring: "The bath. Comparative safety."

Beyond the locked door now arose the sound of other doors opening, of footsteps, of voices: "What was that?" "Who screamed?" "Something must have fallen." "For goodness' sake, father, turn on the lights!" A great many people seemed to be discussing burglars and apologizing for their *négligé* attire all in the same breath. Two facts Stagg now appreciated simultaneously: this was not his brother-in-law's house, and there was conclusive evidence against him as a housebreaker. The retreat must be continued. He limped towards the window, rubbing his aching bones, and looked out into the night. Horrors! Men on the front lawn! He was between two fires, with only a frail lock for protection.

Thereupon Stagg revealed his strategic genius. Into his head flashed a Napoleonic idea. Members of the family frequent baths; burglars never do. If he started the bath running nobody would have the indelicacy to force an entrance. Resourceful to the last, Stagg turned both taps on full, and a rushing sound filled the little room.

By this time he could hear the police force tramping upstairs. A thorough search was evidently in progress. Voices sounded faintly through the door.

"Who's taking a bath? Is it Margery?"

"Nonsense, John! It's after twelve, and——"

"I know I heard him go in there."

"Can't we find out?"

A thump on the door, and a squeak of the knob.

"Who's there?" shouted a gruff voice.

For answer Stagg, with a despairing look at the lawn, where one figure still stood guard, only swashed his hand loudly in the fast-filling bath.

"Business of bathing," he said to himself, nervously.

More knocking and imperative shouts. Stagg splashed tremendously, puffing and blowing a little for the sake of realism.

"Such is the instinctive delicacy of our aristocracy," he thought, "that this delays them. They'd have battered down any other door long ago."

Once more the stentorian voice cried: "Who's there?"

"Margery," answered Stagg, in a gentle falsetto that unexpectedly broke into a vigorous bass. "Don't come in!"

Again he swashed in the bath and rattled the soap-rack, unexpectedly splashing a little soapy water into his eyes as he did so.

Evidently Stagg's impersonation was not convincing; for instantly something hit the door with terrific force. Stagg made a leap for the window, with its forlorn hope of escape. Blinded as he was with smarting soap, his foot slipped upon the sill; then, with a boom and a splash, he descended into the bath. As he lifted his head out of the soapy water he felt rather than saw, for he couldn't open his eyes at all now, that the light had been turned on, and that two people were rushing into the room.

"Well," thundered an enormous voice, "what are you doing here?"

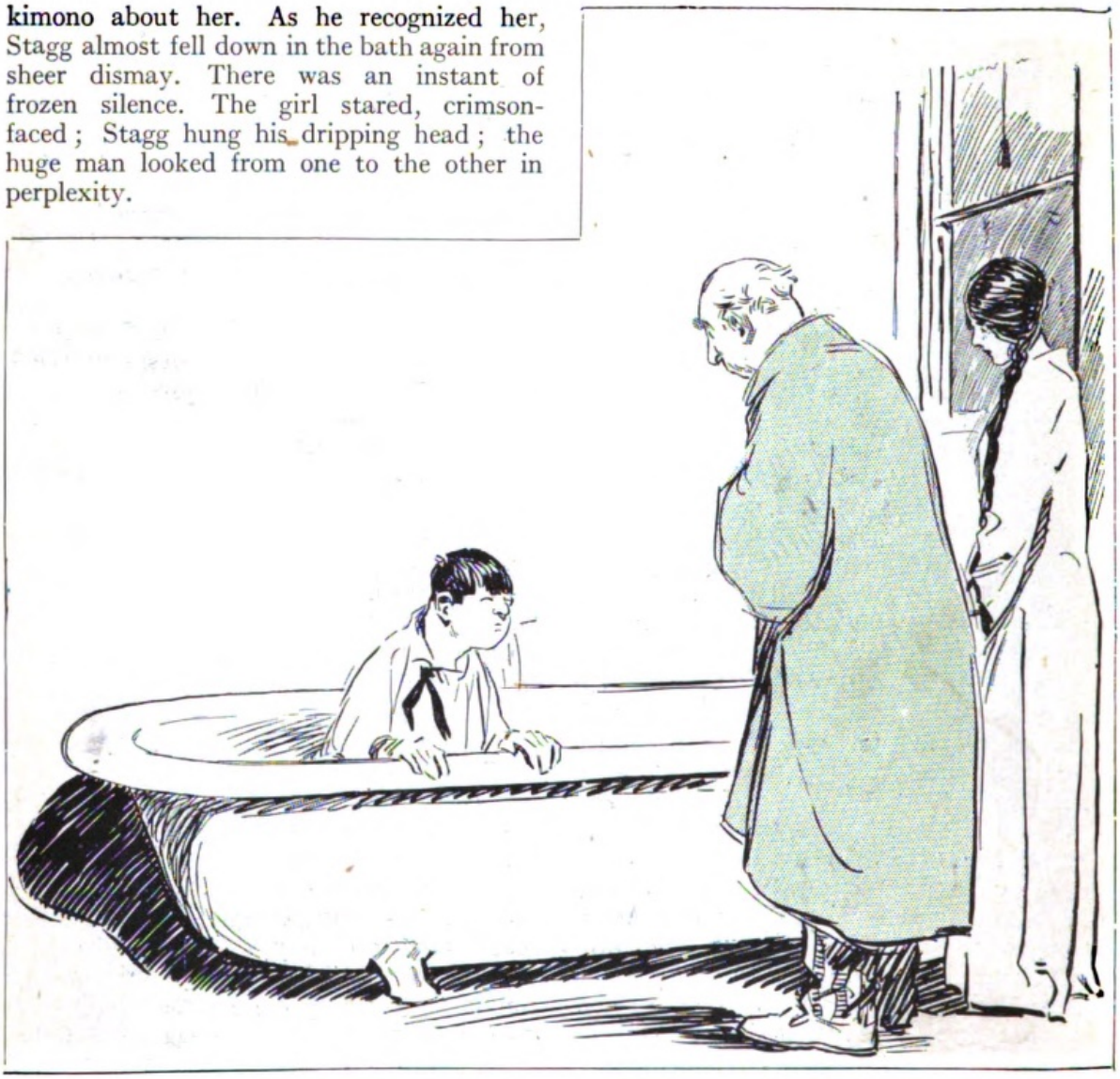
"I'm trying to find Mr. Craigville's house," began Stagg, uncertainly, rising from the deep like an amphibious animal.

"You won't find it in that bath, young man," replied the voice, sternly. Then, in an undertone: "He's drunk, evidently. Margery, where's the officer with the handcuffs?"

Indignant, Stagg grasped for a towel, found one, and mopped his face. The gift of sight returned to his smarting eyes. He found himself face to face with a huge man in a bath-robe, behind whom cowered a very pretty girl with her hair in a braid and a violet

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kimono about her. As he recognized her, Stagg almost fell down in the bath again from sheer dismay. There was an instant of frozen silence. The girl stared, crimson-faced; Stagg hung his dripping head; the huge man looked from one to the other in perplexity.



"'WELL,' THUNDERED AN ENORMOUS VOICE, 'WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?'"

Then the spell was broken by the voice of a fourth person. Jack Craigville had climbed the ladder against the house and crawled up the veranda roof. With his bath wrapper flying in the breeze, he appeared, greatly excited, at the window.

"Billy," he said, with the utmost courtesy, "I want to introduce you to Miss Seton—and Mr. Seton, our rector. This is my brother-in-law, Mr. Stagg."

"Mr. Stagg and I have already met, a little earlier in the evening," observed Miss Seton, coldly.

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# "DARWIN," A MONKEY

By
IANTHE
CAVENDISH.

Illustrated by
Warwick Reynolds.



READER, has it ever been your lot to keep a monkey? If not, I envy you! Read, mark, and be warned while yet there is time.

Nemesis, or I know not what evil genius, inclined me in a moment of aberration to purchase the prettiest imaginable little ape whose age was said to be six months, its weight half a pound. He was in a small deal box peering at me through the wire-netting in a miserable manner. I at once bought a large parrot-cage and transferred him to it, and had him conveyed to my house, where it is impossible to realize the mischief he has wrought. He soon discovered that by standing up and holding the top wires of the cage he could propel it from one side of the room to the other at a great rate.

Three times a day it is necessary to let him out of the cage in order to change the straw; and it is at these times he appears to devise what mischief he may best perpetrate. The first period is in the morning about eight o'clock, when my maid brings my tea and hot water and prepares my bath. Then she lets out Darwin and carries his cage down to clean. For a few moments Darwin is charming; he perches on my shoulder and softly bites my cheek, which is his way of kissing. Then he has some milk in an egg-cup. His phase of good behaviour, however, does not last; he wants to put his fingers into my cup to get out the sugar, and when I scold him he tries to upset the cup or seizes and rushes off with the spoon. Then begins a race between Darwin and myself which shall first perform our ablutions. When he sees that I am determined to be first he seats himself on the towel-horse and watches intently my every movement until I make my egress, when he plunges in and, spraying the water all over himself and the carpet, is supremely happy.

When he comes out I may be seated in front of the glass brushing my hair; if so, he will spring on my shoulder and as fast as I put in a hair-pin he will pull it out, till hair-dressing becomes an impossibility, and I fling him off my shoulder impatiently. For a short time there is peace. I am under the

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vain impression that he has returned to the tub, and continue my hair-dressing tranquilly.

When I have finished I go over to see what he is about. He is no longer tubbing himself. I notice with dismay that the cupboard door is ajar, I having stupidly left the key in it. I open the door to find Darwin at the medicine-chest; he is seated on the lid chewing a cork, while collars, handkerchiefs, and gloves wallow in camphorated oil, and among them are strewn pastilles of glycerine, eucalyptus, and potash. When he sees me he scuttles off, snatching the key out of the cupboard door as he scampers past. I chase him to recover the key. My Man of Wisdom looks in at the door in all his morning freshness. Darwin flings down the key and springs upon his shoulder, imprinting on his collar the marks of his grimy, oily hands. The Man of Wisdom's smile disappears; he shouts; and I seize Darwin and hustle him into the cage which the maid has just brought. Then I padlock the door and breathe a sigh of relief. Until two o'clock there will be comparative peace.



DARWIN, THE MONKEY.

Why, I am often asked, and as often ask myself, why was I so foolish as to get a monkey? Who can say? Man uncorks the bottle and lets out the *génie*, little dreaming of the dimensions it will assume.

Since Darwin's advent we appear to be losing many friends or unintentionally turning them into enemies. Yet how could one foresee that a certain Bishop who came to see us would stupidly poke his finger into Darwin's cage?

"I can conceive," said the Bishop, "that one would become very fond of the interesting little fellow," and he put one white finger into the cage. Darwin promptly seized it and bit it. And the Bishop hastily withdrew his finger with a very unepiscopalian epithet.

Nor, when Lady J—— (a connection by marriage) came over on her way to Cannes and proposed herself to luncheon, could I imagine that she would leave her valuable ostrich feather stole on the drawing-room sofa. Darwin was in his cage by the fire, and Lady J——, who pronounced him "a horror," was sitting on the sofa as far away from him as possible. I was occupied in giving finishing touches to the luncheon table, and for the time had forgotten Darwin, who was not to lunch with us as usual, Lady J—— declaring that she could not touch a morsel if that horrible little rodent were in the




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room. So we left him by the fire, and in the pleasure of hearing all the family news he completely escaped my memory.

Lady J——'s train went at four p.m., and the Man of Wisdom suggested our returning to the drawing-room. Darwin was sitting quietly in his cage where we had left him, and I carried him in a chicken-bone which I knew would occupy him for the rest of Lady J——'s visit. Presently she turned to me. "Would you ask your maid for my stole? I left it on the sofa." I rang, and when Marie answered my summons she declared she had not touched it; indeed, that she had not seen it at all.

Lady J—— was irate. "My dear, is your maid honest?" she asked. "She positively must have noticed my stole."

That anyone should have failed to notice her stole passed Lady J——'s comprehension. It cost I know not what fabulous sum.

I assured her that Marie was perfectly honest and had been with me several years. "You did not leave it on board?" I asked.

"Then someone has stolen it," Lady J—— said, in an aggressive manner, looking coldly and suspiciously at me.

I was annoyed, and declared that was ridiculous.

Then Marie, who had been officiously poking at Darwin's cage, cried:—

"*Mais, regardez donc, madame, c'est ici.*"

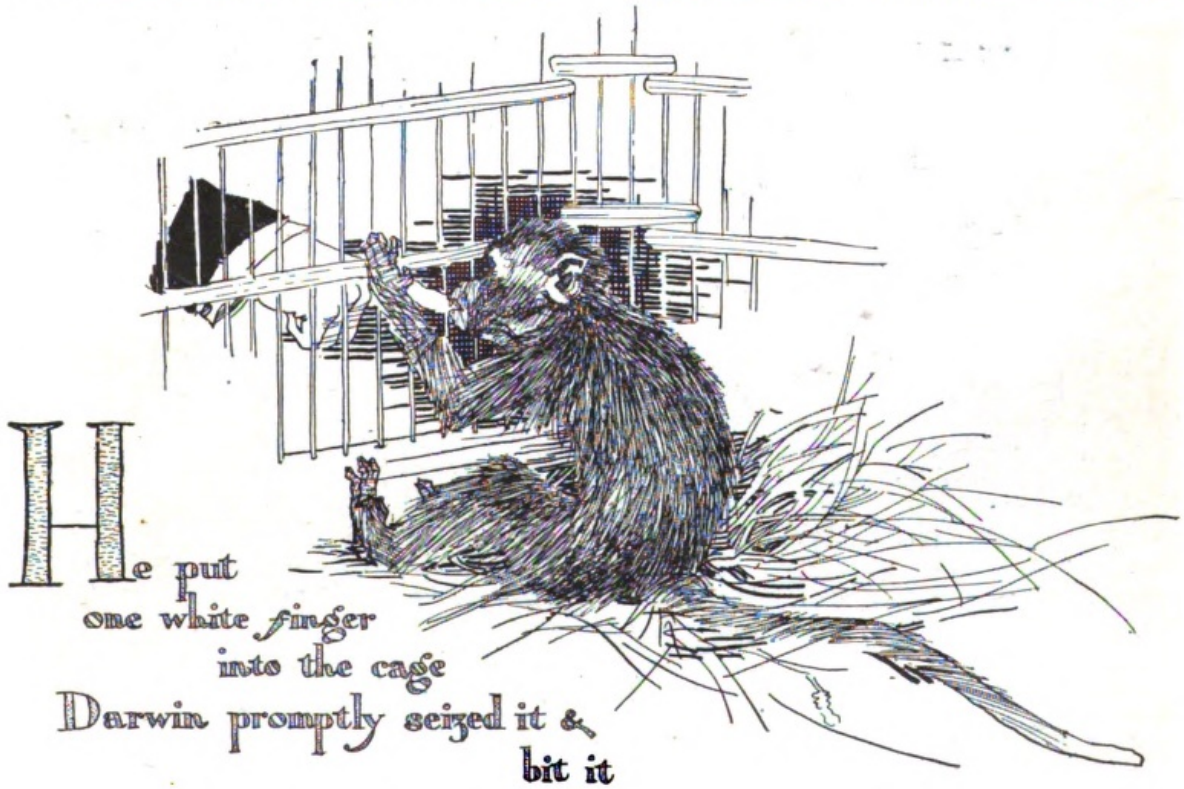
And, hidden underneath the straw, lay Lady J——'s poor mutilated stole.

We pulled it out in bits; and she drove off in high dudgeon.

"Well, you need never expect to see me again. I would sooner lunch at the Zoological Gardens!" was her parting shot.

I could have wept. It was a most unfortunate episode. And for weeks I had letters from various members of the family upbraiding me and depicting Lady J——'s wrath.

Sometimes I think that Darwin is possessed with the spirit of evil. There is nothing in the way of mischief that he does not achieve. And however careful one is to put away things before he is let out, it always happens




"On the boat! Oh, dear, no! I left it on the sofa. That dreadful little animal could not have got hold of it, could he?"

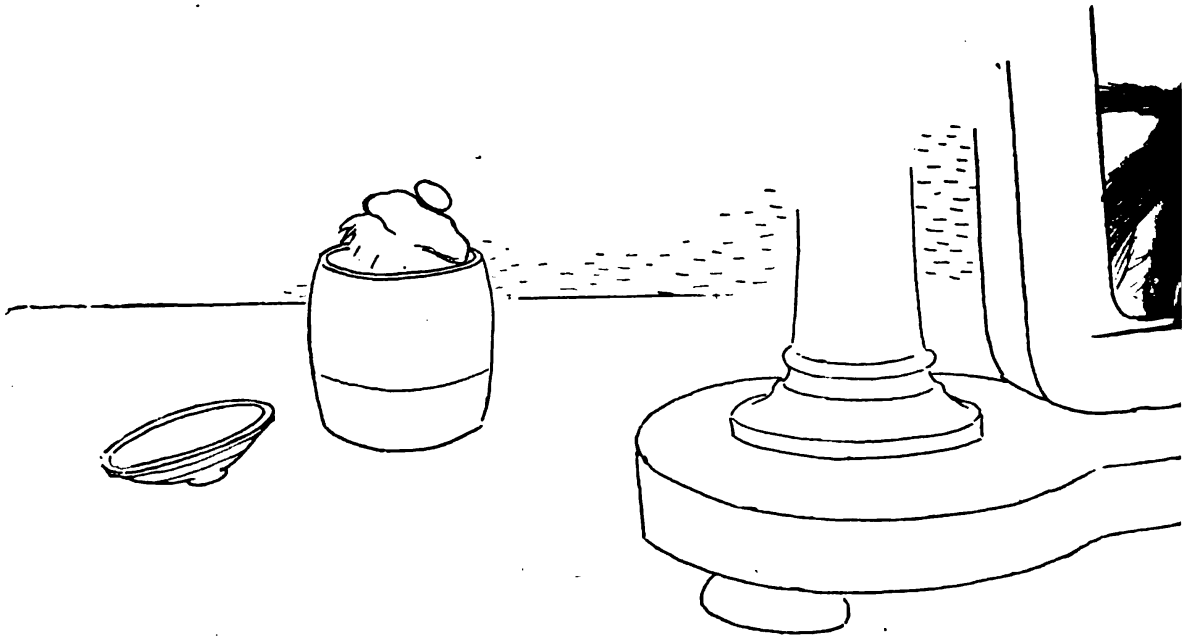
Again I assured her that that was impossible; he had been in his cage all the time by the fire. We should have seen him, as the folding doors into the dining-room were open.

that something is forgotten, some valuable thing that he is sure to seize and break. We sit curtainless; he has torn the muslin curtains to shreds. The pretty chintz covers are in holes and soiled with his grimy foot and hand prints.

One afternoon the Man of Wisdom had given way to a brain-storm of unusual violence,

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brewed by Darwin's having bitten the top off his fountain-pen and spilled the contents of the gum-bottle over some valuable manuscripts. I think he would have beaten him had he found him. But Darwin had disappeared. He was not found for some hours later, though we hunted everywhere. At last he was discovered asleep in the cellarette, having broken two bottles of port wine. We decided we would give him back to the merchant from whom we bought him. And that afternoon we went down to the man and asked him to take him back at half-price. "We cannot keep him any longer," we said; "he is too mischievous, and when he is angry he bites."



"You should beat him, madam," said the man. "The one I have bit me once; but he never did it again."

I asked if the other had got well through the winter.

The man said he had, and took us into a dark and very cold shed wherein cowered a miserable-looking monkey much bigger than Darwin. It was crouching down on some dirty straw. The man gave him a kick and the wretched animal squealed and pulled at his chain in a terrified manner. I thought of Darwin and my heart ached. Oh, that I had never in a weak moment been tempted to buy him. Now I was adding a hundredfold to his sufferings to have kept him in luxury, and then to send him back to this. He slept in flannel and the cleanest straw, covered with a Shetland shawl, in my room, in front of the fire. Every night before he went to sleep he had a cup of warm milk. And how he enjoyed it! How he would miss it! But I thought of the Man of Wisdom's brainstorm, and I steeled my heart.

It was arranged that the merchant should come for him the next day about four o'clock in the afternoon. And we returned home.

"Thank Heaven we shall get rid of the pest," said the Man of Wisdom. But my heart was full. I did not speak.

How delighted Darwin was to see us, little knowing the errand on which we had been. He stretched out his tiny hand for the dainty I always brought him—a fig or date or tangerine. He always expected it.

That last evening we let him stay out longer than usual. How he scampered round the room springing from chair to chair, and rushing at his own reflection in the big looking-glass. Then he came and sat on my shoulder, leaning his soft little brown head against my cheek. Darwin's last night with us! How little he suspected it as he sipped the warm milk out of his cup, holding it with both his tiny hands and gazing up at me with his bright brown eyes. Then he wanted to play with me, as he always does before I cover him up for the night. But that last night I had no heart to play. He is the maddest, merriest little mortal to-night. But to-morrow how will he sleep in that cold, damp shed? I could not sleep for thinking of him.

That last day we gave Darwin his favourite dinner—chicken and apple-tart, with cream cheese. How he enjoyed it! Then I let him scamper about the room till half-past

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three o'clock, though I did not stay with him. I could not bear to see him so happy knowing that the man would soon come, and that Darwin might never be happy again.

"Oh, my little Darwin, if I could only make you understand," I said, as I put him in his cage and came and sat by him. He was tired after his romp, for he held my hand and leaned his little face against it and looked up in my face happily as I talked to him. The Man of Wisdom had gone out, saying that he would not be back till tea-time. "We have tried to keep you," I went on, as if he could understand, "and we would have kept you if it had been possible; but you have been such a dreadful little animal we cannot keep you any longer, and now I am afraid you are going to be most unhappy." Darwin bit my finger very softly, which is his way of kissing, and jabbered back at me sleepily, looking extremely happy. My eyes filled with tears. "No one could keep you, though you are such a dear little, pretty fellow. Oh, Darwin, you would forgive us if you could only understand."

And then the door opened, and Marie showed in the monkey-merchant.

They say that monkeys never forget. I do not know if it is the case, but Darwin, who at first eyed the man with careless curiosity, presently stared at the deal box he carried—the deal box, one side covered with wire-netting—the same box in which I had first seen him.

I could feel Darwin tremble violently as he gazed at it.

M. L—— opened the wire lid and then asked me for the key of the padlock of the cage. I gave it to him, and as he stooped to unlock it Darwin gave a little cry and started back, standing on his hind legs and talking to me rapidly and reproachfully, his little face looking white and pinched with fear.

"Wait, monsieur," I said. "I have changed my mind. I do not wish to sell him."



Rushing at his own reflection in the big looking-glass

M. L—— turned angrily, and I took the key out of the padlock.

M. L—— declared that he had been made a fool of. We had come to him yesterday and asked him to buy back the monkey. It had been decided then. Now he had wasted his time in coming all this way for nothing.

Then he went away, slamming the hall door behind him.

Darwin gave a little sob as he still held my hand, rubbing his wet eyes against it. I think, as we sat there quite still, we were both crying.

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# The Air-Scout

By F. Britten Austin
Illustrated By Gerald Leake R.B.A.

A LARGE level meadow bit squarely into the edge of the woodland. The centre of the space, enclosed on three sides by trees as by a wall, was an empty stretch of turf, browned by much traffic and littered with the scraps of paper which are the inevitable deposit of any congregation of human beings. The left-hand side was occupied by a neat row of slate-grey motor-lorries. The right showed an equally neat array of tents and sheds over which hung a faint film of wood-smoke. At regular intervals along the third side a series of placards was affixed to the tree-trunks, each exhibiting a conspicuous number like stands at a cattle-show. The stands, however, were vacant. In front of the sheds on the right stood a little group of men in khaki, and near them two men in shirt and trousers were busy at a portable forge, whence issued the film of smoke. The hammer-strokes of these men were visible and evidently delivered with force, yet, curiously enough, at a little distance they appeared to fall in silence. A vast noise that came from beyond the wood swallowed all other sounds. The drowsy air of the hot noon trembled with concussions so rapid that they merged into one deep-throated, deafening roar. The field was the aeroplane depot of the army. The roar was the roar of the battle which that army was fighting.

Despite the apparent nearness of the strife, there was little of military spectacle about the depot. At the corner of the wood a squadron of dismounted troopers stood by their horses. A little farther back, along the rough lane which led into the field, a gun mounted on a motor-lorry stuck its nose perpendicularly into the air. Three or four men sat on the lorry in easy attitudes, and one stood up, glasses to his eyes, scanning the blue sky. The group of khaki-clad men paid no more attention to them than they did to the battle din which swelled over the woodland. They were absorbed in contemplation of a large, curious-looking bush which stood a few yards in front of them.

A closer look at that bush revealed that it was artificial. It was, in fact, a largish shed whose walls and roof were composed of green boughs. Men were busy within it, and a shaft of sunlight that penetrated the leaves fell in a patch of gold upon some yellow fabric. The object thus illuminated was the wing of a small, single-seater monoplane.

A little apart from the other members of the group a slightly-built young fellow, garbed for the ascent, stood in earnest colloquy with a tall, lean staff-officer. Behind them the others conversed in tones just loud enough to be heard in the incessant roar. They were discussing the disaster of the dawn.

The blow of the enemy had been terrible. The army had been smitten in its eyes. It was now only a blind giant striking at an adversary whose vision was unimpaired.

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The entire air-squadron of the force, rising from its harbourage at the break of day, had been suddenly assailed by a superior fleet that dropped out of the clouds upon them. Watchers from below had seen short lightning-flashes stabbing the grey mist, had heard a sharp outbreak of firing, had seen phantom aeroplanes rising, circling, swooping, colliding in the thin cloud, had seen the machines one after another tumble and dive, lapped by flames, in a sickening rush to earth. Not theirs alone now lay, crumpled and contorted masses of scrap-iron, over the countryside, but of theirs none had escaped. The enemy held command of the air. The rear of their battle-line was a picture that his scouts could report upon at leisure. What lay at the rear of his? None knew, but the vehemence of his fire told that he was pressing his advantage. The presentiment of defeat lay heavy on the little group as they disputed on the blame to be allotted for the catastrophe.

The staff-officer tugged impatiently at his little grey moustache. His teeth champed at a bit of grass that was no longer there. In his anxiety he had not noticed that it had fallen from his mouth.

"I wish those chaps would be quick," he said. "The general is most anxious to have that flank cleared up."

"They are being quick, sir," replied the aviator, with a smile.

His keen, thoughtful face showed that he was not indifferent to the urgency of the situation, but his calm mouth told of nerves that nothing could shake. Within that green bower lay the one hope of the army—its lightest and swiftest monoplane, damaged in landing the day before, now being repaired as fast as skilled hands could do the work.

"You quite understand, don't you?" said the staff-officer, repeating himself for the tenth time. "The general thinks that a movement is in progress against our right flank. A screen is extending there which he cannot penetrate. If they are moving a large force round us he can detach the Sixth Division to hold them, and with a massed attack he'll crumple up their left centre, which they must have weakened. He'll repeat Salamanca, that's what he said. I don't know what happened at Salamanca," he concluded, irritably; "but anyway, he daren't move a man till he's sure. I wish your chaps would get finished." He looked up into the air above him with a circling glance. "How many have they got now?"

"Four, I make it," replied the aviator, equably. "They had ten yesterday. Five were smashed up this morning. One got winged an hour ago."

At that moment a dirty and perspiring man came out of the bower and, approaching them, saluted.

"Ready, sir," he said.

"Right; get her out, then," said the aviator. "No—wait!" His gaze had gone up to the sky. "There he comes again."

"Con-found it!" said the staff-officer, staring upwards also.

High in the air an aeroplane was coming towards them, parallel with their own battle-line. In the swollen roar of the conflict, the hum of its engine was inaudible. It seemed to drift onward leisurely enough, sinking slightly as it approached, but well above effective gun-fire; tiny white dots of smoke that sprang into the air below it were a proof of that. Slowly, as though making a careful examination, it passed overhead. Suddenly it turned and dropped still lower, coming back towards them. Something had awakened suspicion in the men up there. The reason for that artificial bush became apparent. The staff-officer gazed at the aeroplane, now rapidly enlarging itself in his vision, as though mesmerized. Anxiety for that precious machine under the leaves paralyzed him.

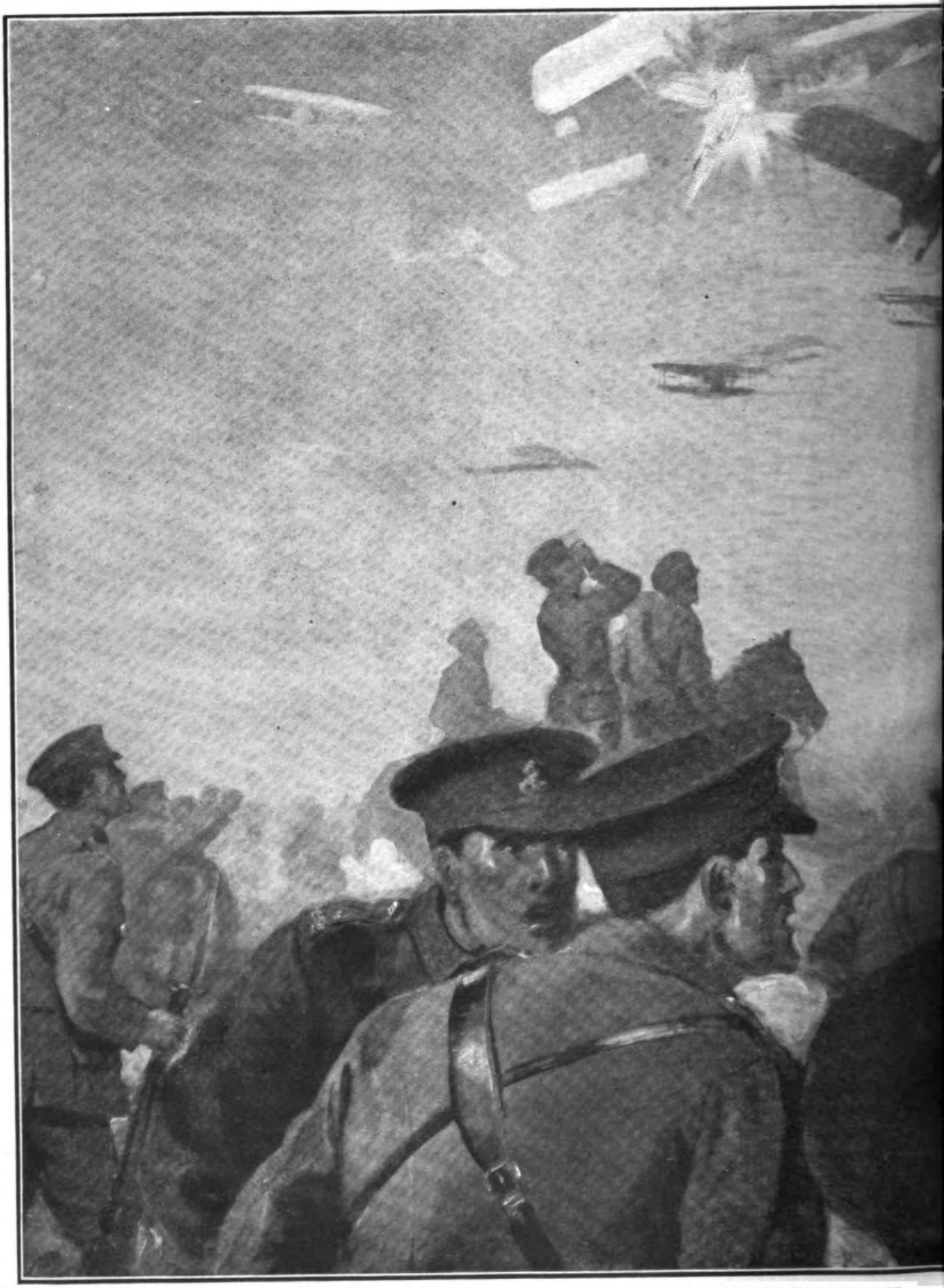
The aviator had turned to look at the gun on the motor-lorry. The group about it sat in quiet expectation. Its muzzle moved gently, came a little out of the perpendicular. The aviator looked up again at the machine drifting overhead. He heard a sudden heavy detonation on his left, and almost simultaneously he saw a bright flash appear in the dark body of the aeroplane. The machine lurched, toppled, dived, and, falling rapidly, turned bottom up in the air. A couple of dark figures fell out and raced it in its rush to the ground. A long minute later it struck the centre of the field. Flames burst out of a shapeless wreck. The aviator did not heed it. He ran towards the bower.

"Quick!" he cried. "Get her out!"

Torn down by twenty pairs of eager hands, the bower fell apart. The little monoplane was run out, and lay like a dragon-fly resting lightly on the earth.

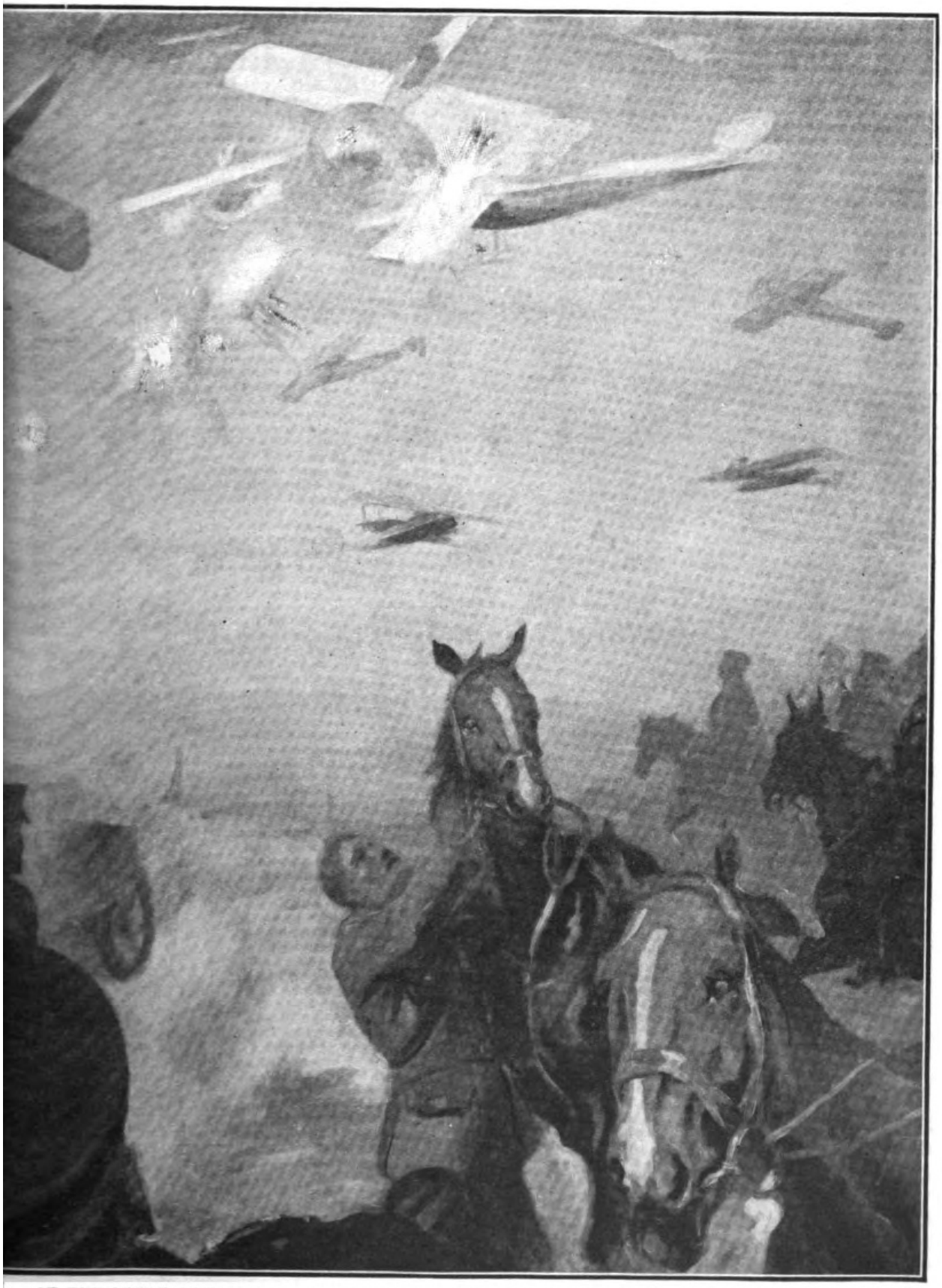
The aviator climbed into his seat between the wings, sent a glance from the compass to the map held open in its frame, saw that the message-bags were ready to his hand, and tested the strap of the field-glasses hanging from his neck with a sharp tug.

He was ready. In front of him two soldier mechanics stood holding the long blades of the tractor screw. Over there beyond the



"THE ENTIRE AIR-SQUADRON OF THE FORCE, RISING FROM ITS HARBOURAGE

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AT THE BREAK OF DAY, HAD BEEN SUDDENLY ASSAILED BY A SUPERIOR FLEET."

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wood, the uproar of the battle mounted in violent paroxysms, each of which surpassed its predecessor. The tall staff-officer approached and held out his hand.

"Good-bye—and good luck," he said. "And, for Heaven's sake, let us know what's happening on that flank. Don't wait to get back—drop the message." He looked at his watch. "It's now twelve. If we don't know something within an hour it's all over with our chance. Can you manage it?"

"I'll try, sir," said the aviator, checking the hour with a glance at his own clock.

The staff-officer turned an anxious pair of eyes upward for a swift look into the sky, seemed about to make a remark, and then obviously refrained. "Good luck!" was all he could trust himself to say.

The aviator smiled and nodded cheerfully. Then he ejaculated a sharp order to the mechanics. They flung the blades of the tractor into revolution. The machine, emitting a series of rifle-like reports, commenced to run across the field. The tractor became a blur.

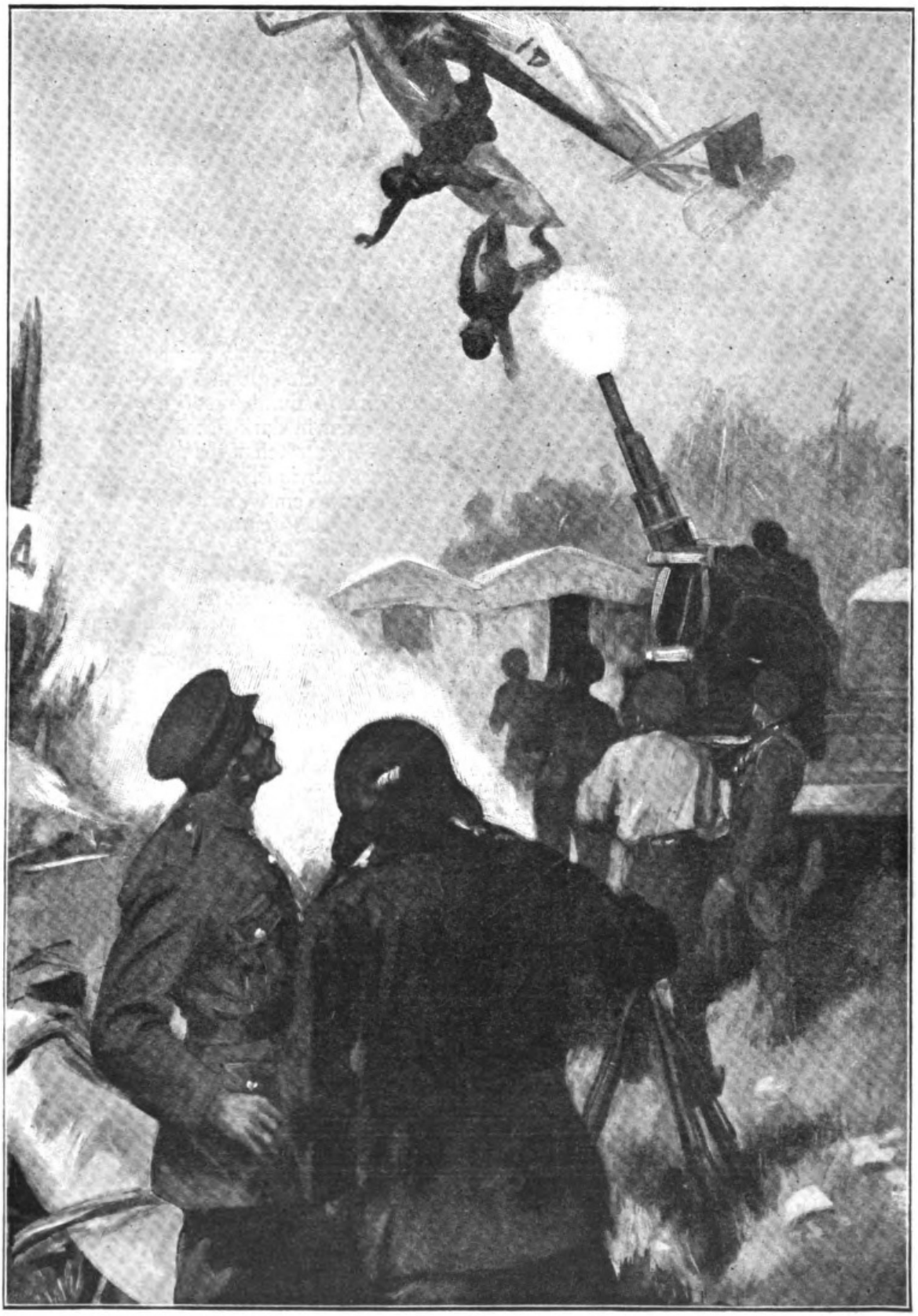
The woodland appeared to rush towards him, and then suddenly dropped away in a diagonal underneath. His eyes on the dial of the barograph, the aviator warped the machine round and set the planes to an acute angle of elevation. Confident in the power of his engine, he mounted steeply in a spiral. The record on the dial rose with every second—a hundred feet—two hundred—four hundred. In two and a half minutes he had risen one thousand feet. He cast a swift look below him. He was still over the field, had a glimpse of a group of tiny figures clustered in front of the sheds. The rim of the horizon came up, the earth fell into a great concavity. It was like looking down into a vast bowl containing woods and fields and flattened hills. From the bowl clouds of yellow-grey dust arose like smoke, and out of the dust came a multiplicity of heavy crashes that detached themselves from a background of unceasing clatter mingled with one long, rolling, thunderous roar.

It was but a hasty glance the aviator threw below him. Still mounting, his eyes searched the blue air on a level with himself, above him. The enemy's three machines—where were they? Far off to his left a dark speck hung in the sky. He watched it intently as his machine climbed. It was a biplane. It appeared to be drifting away from him, engaged in a reconnaissance of their left flank, he decided. At any rate, as yet they seemed not to have perceived him. The others were not visible. He shot a glance at the barograph—three thousand feet. He had been climbing for five and a half minutes. Almost immediately he saw a trail of smoke ascending with incredible velocity in the air a little below him to his right. The trail finished abruptly in a vivid flash, a burst of white smoke, and a violent detonation. The monoplane rocked from side to side in the sudden disturbance of the air, but continued to climb. A second later a similar trail ended in an explosion at a level with him on his left. He saw a gash appear suddenly in the fabric of one of his planes and the needle of the barograph switch back fifty feet with a jerk. Then the altitude record mounted again steadily—three thousand two hundred and fifty—three thousand five hundred—four thousand. The noise of the battle diminished as he rose, dropping to a point where it was all but obscured by the roar of his own engine. Below him the smoke trails leaped up at him and burst viciously in vain.

Four thousand five hundred feet—he glanced at the hostile biplane to his left and saw that it hung larger in the sky. Even in the moment for which he watched it, it dilated. It was approaching at top speed. He was discovered, pursued. Instantly he turned off to his right and raced across the battle-field in the direction of the threatening hostile flank. As he did so, he perceived another aeroplane rising from the enemy's lines. It climbed swiftly in bold swoops and then shot off towards him on a great upward slant. Two!—where was the third? He failed to discover it, and held on his course.

His direction was at an angle across the battle-field, which took him towards the enemy's left flank rather than to their own right. As he sped over it, he looked down upon a broad, miles-long belt of yellow-grey dust that rose raggedly into the air and was spotted with an innumerable multitude of white puffs that renewed themselves as fast as they were dissipated. In many places these puffs congregated thickly and, as they broke, linked themselves with others until they floated like little narrow clouds in the air below him. As he looked down into the great concavity of the earth he seemed to be over some enormous smoking fissure in a crater whose circumference was the horizon. The rumble and roar which ascended from it assisted the illusion. Tiny sparks of flame darted and flickered in the fumes of that inferno, and here and there flashed a number of glittering points, the reflection of the sun from advancing bayonets. To distinguish

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"A COUPLE OF DARK FIGURES FELL OUT AND RACED IT IN ITS RUSH TO THE GROUND."

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men was impossible, but in occasional rifts in the dust curtain he could make out brown patches of varying size, and, over to his left on the enemy's side, similar though darker patches.

He could permit himself no sustained scrutiny of the scene below him, for the management of the machine began to claim all his attention. Even at that great height above the battle, the air on that windless day, shaken and riven by the unceasing concussions of the massed artillery of two armies, was full of flaws. The needle of the barograph flickered, oscillating violently in leaps to and fro. The monoplane, tilted dangerously, now on one side, now on the other, in eddies of the tortured atmosphere, slid downward dizzily ere it could be brought up to climb a bank of air. It needed strong arms at the controls, a quick brain and nerves of perfect tone to keep her upon the appointed course. Glancing back, the aviator saw that the flight of the nearer of the two hostile machines, the one which had risen from the enemy's lines and was now approaching him on his left, was similarly erratic.

An overpowering heat, as from a vast open furnace, arose from the battle-field below. It was the heat from thousands of explosions, renewed incessantly and sustained over many hours. Stifling gusts blew on to the aviator's face, carrying with them a peculiar smell of burning cloth. With these gusts the roar of the battle seemed to leap up to him. The air was oppressive, despite the speed at which he clove it, highly charged with electricity, heavy with the menace of a storm. Yet no cloud broke the monotony of the blue sky. The machine, racing onward, was now crossing the battle-lines of the enemy's left flank.

Suddenly he heard a faint rattle behind him. The hostile aeroplane, realizing that it had failed to head him off, was firing furiously. He felt the machine shiver under a quick succession of hard raps. Instinctively, he pressed upon his accelerator, and, with a touch on the warping lever, the machine shot forward and upward at terrific speed. The raps ceased. He turned his head and saw his enemy rapidly diminish in size behind him; saw that the other aeroplane, the one he had seen first, had fallen far in rear. A confident smile came on the tight lips of the aviator. He could outpace them both.

He was now above the enemy's left flank —a little to the right of the spot that the Commander-in-Chief had designated as the objective of his possible attack. The scout switched off his engine and commenced to drop along a slant towards the centre of the enemy's position. With the sudden silencing of his engine the roar of the battle came up at him in a crash and stayed there. He glanced at the time—twelve-thirteen—and gave himself a limit of two minutes in which to reconnoitre. For the moment he ignored his adversaries in the air. As he gazed down through the transparent panel between his feet, his glasses to his eyes, the ground that slid away from under him appeared to be subjected to a constantly increasing magnification. Fields, houses, roads grew momentarily more distinct. Without taking his gaze from the scene below him, the aviator checked the drop of his machine and drove forward. Quickly his trained eye took in the details of the ground, the position and approximate numbers of the men that he saw massed in dark patches here and there. Over a long stretch of the position the enemy's line was obviously thinner. The country behind it was empty of troops. The general's intuition was correct. The enemy had weakened his left centre. Point number one was settled. Now what had he done with the troops he had withdrawn?

As the aviator turned his machine to reconnoitre in the new direction, he was surprised to see the hostile aeroplane between him and his objective. Absorbed in his scrutiny of the ground, he had all but forgotten it. It was slightly higher than himself and about half a mile distant. He could not carry out his reconnaissance without coming into a fatal proximity to its machine-gun, and he could not return directly over the battle-lines without passing between the crossed fires of this and the other machine now drawing close. Even as the realization of his position flashed on him, a narrow slit appeared in one of his planes. The nearer of his foes was already firing.

Quicker than thought he turned and raced off into the country behind the battle. A plan, the only one with a possible chance of success, had sprung into his mind. He had no intention of failing in this all-important mission of his. But first he must get out of the range of that deadly machine-gun. He dared not rise across it at barely half a mile range. At full speed he raced away, inclining his machine downwards. The hostile aeroplane followed, depressing her course likewise, to get him into the zone of fire or to force him to the ground. The scout's speedometer registered one hundred miles an hour. Beneath his feet he had glimpses of trees and houses and fields flitting past in a stream where salient features

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prolonged themselves into long blurred lines. They looked oddly large after the altitude at which he had been contemplating them. He threw a glance over his shoulder at his pursuers. The nearer was now rather more than a mile away. The other had apparently given up the chase. The clock stood at twelve-sixteen and a half. In less than two minutes he had distanced his adversary by nearly a mile. He had therefore a superiority in speed of about twenty-five miles per hour. He did not consciously deduce this result. His trained mind, working with incomputable swiftness under the stimulant of imminent danger, gave him the result like an intuition. His plan presented itself to him completely formed. At this distance he could risk the danger-zone of the machine-gun for the few moments he would be in it. He swerved his machine upward and climbed steeply. In a minute the other aeroplane was level with him, beneath him. The scout rose along a slant, slowing down his engine until his pace was almost exactly equal to that of the machine below. Both rose steadily.

The battle-din ceased altogether behind him. He flew in the seeming silence of the roar of his own engine and the deeper bass of the other engine, just audible, below. He bent forward over his map and picked out his approximate position. Then he noted a village some twenty miles in rear of the battle and drew an imaginary line from it south-westward to the enemy's left flank. That village was to serve as turning-point. He should reach it, he calculated, at twelve-twenty-nine. The barograph indicated three thousand feet, and still rising.

Twelve-twenty-seven—the scout bent his eyes on the ground. A couple of minutes later a handful of white cottages flitted past as he looked down between his feet. His enemy could not be seen. The body of the monoplane hid him as he flew below and slightly in rear, but the roar of his engine, louder than the scout's own, could just be heard.

Now was the time. The scout turned off abruptly at a tangent along the line he had marked out for himself, and drove his engine at its fastest. The speedometer-needle oscillated over a hundred and one miles an hour. He calculated that he had approximately twenty miles to go ere he reached the patch of country he wished to explore. He should reach the commencement of the enemy's left flank at twelve-forty-one, and be able to spend six minutes in flying over five miles of ground, and then have a couple of minutes in hand. To the trained intellect behind his keen eyes six minutes was amply sufficient. Having run along the left flank, it was simplicity itself to turn to the right and glide down into his own lines. There seemed nothing to stop him. The pursuing machine was being quickly left behind. The slow biplane now far off to his right could not possibly arrive in time. The sky in front was clear of any menace.

Again he began to draw close to the great belt of dust-cloud which stretched far to his right, and again the din of battle began to overpower the roar of his engine. Directly ahead was a dark mass of woodland. It was thence that the enemy's screen around the right flank of the scout's army commenced. He swerved slightly to the left, behind it. The hour was a second or two over twelve-forty.

Below him was a network of country roads, and from four strands of that network, which ran in an approximately parallel direction, coincident with his own course, arose long, dense clouds of dust. It was the dust of marching columns. The scout shot a glance back at his pursuer, assured himself that it was five or six miles in rear, and slowed down his engine as he entered upon a long, gradual descent over the route of those marching columns.

For mile after mile on those four roads the dust-cloud continued. The scout checked off the distances by villages on his map. Adding the length of the four clouds together, he estimated that about twenty miles of road was occupied by the marching force. It was a whole army corps, then, that was endeavouring to turn their flank. In the open fields between the roads he could distinguish small bodies of cavalry advancing in the same direction. The mass on the roads was certainly infantry, broken here and there by long columns of artillery. The low, dense clouds of dust kicked up by the tramp of thousands of feet were cut into short sections where the guns and wagons of the batteries rolled onward. From a rough calculation of those intersected clouds he decided that four brigades of artillery were on the march. He had descended now to two thousand feet, and he kept at that height as he roared over the plodding columns. Behind him his pursuer had lessened the distance between them, and was getting dangerously close. The biplane on his right was also approaching. Nevertheless, the scout held on his way comfortably. There was nothing to prevent him carrying out his plan.

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He was already well beyond the prolongation of his own army's line of battle when he reached the head of the marching infantry. Contrary to his expectation, however, they were not wheeling to the right. They continued straight on, marching away from the battle, it seemed. The scout was puzzled for a moment. He searched the ground in front of him for more troops. It was apparently empty. Then, from a fold in the landscape considerably ahead, he saw another, smaller, dust-cloud arise. At his highest speed he raced towards it, overtook it in less than a minute. Below him a cavalry brigade, accompanied by two batteries of horse artillery, was trotting sharply forward. What was their objective? He scanned the country in front of them intently. Some three miles ahead of the cavalry was a wooded hill. He picked it out on the map; saw instantly that it commanded the main avenue of retreat of his own army. The enemy's plan was clear. He would occupy it with the cavalry and the two batteries until the infantry got up. The threatened army, then attacked in flank and rear, would find its retreat cut off. If the scout's commander was aiming to repeat Salamanca, the enemy was endeavouring to repeat Jackson's march at Chancellorsville. The danger was pressing. The scout reckoned that within half an hour the hostile cavalry would be in possession of that hill. In an hour the infantry would begin to come up in support. Where was the Sixth Division that he had been told would check the flank movement of the enemy? He searched for it, saw a brown mass about two miles from the wooded hill. Its cavalry might get there in a quarter of an hour by a rapid dash. He had then a quarter of an hour to deliver his message and get the division set in motion. The hour was twelve-forty-eight.

He wheeled towards his own line and commenced a downward glide at a gentle angle. Then, taking his hands from the controls, he rapidly wrote down a clear, concise statement of the case in his report-book. Even if he did not reach earth, his message might. He glanced up to see that his indefatigable pursuer was now swooping down to cut him off. Moments were precious. He ripped out the page, thrust it into the weighted message-bag, and tied it up. Then he started his engine again, aiming for the brown mass of the Sixth Division.

Something made him look to his left. He was startled to see a large biplane rushing up at him from the direction of the wooded hill. It had evidently descended to effect some repairs and had lain hidden far behind his own line. He recognized it at once. It was by far the swiftest and most powerful machine possessed by either army. On his present course a few seconds would bring him within range of its machine-gun. To his right the other machine was rapidly growing larger. In front the slow biplane had sailed over the battle-lines, and was heading straight for him. The three machines were converging on him. The scout saw that he would either be forced away from the battle or destroyed, his message undelivered in either case.

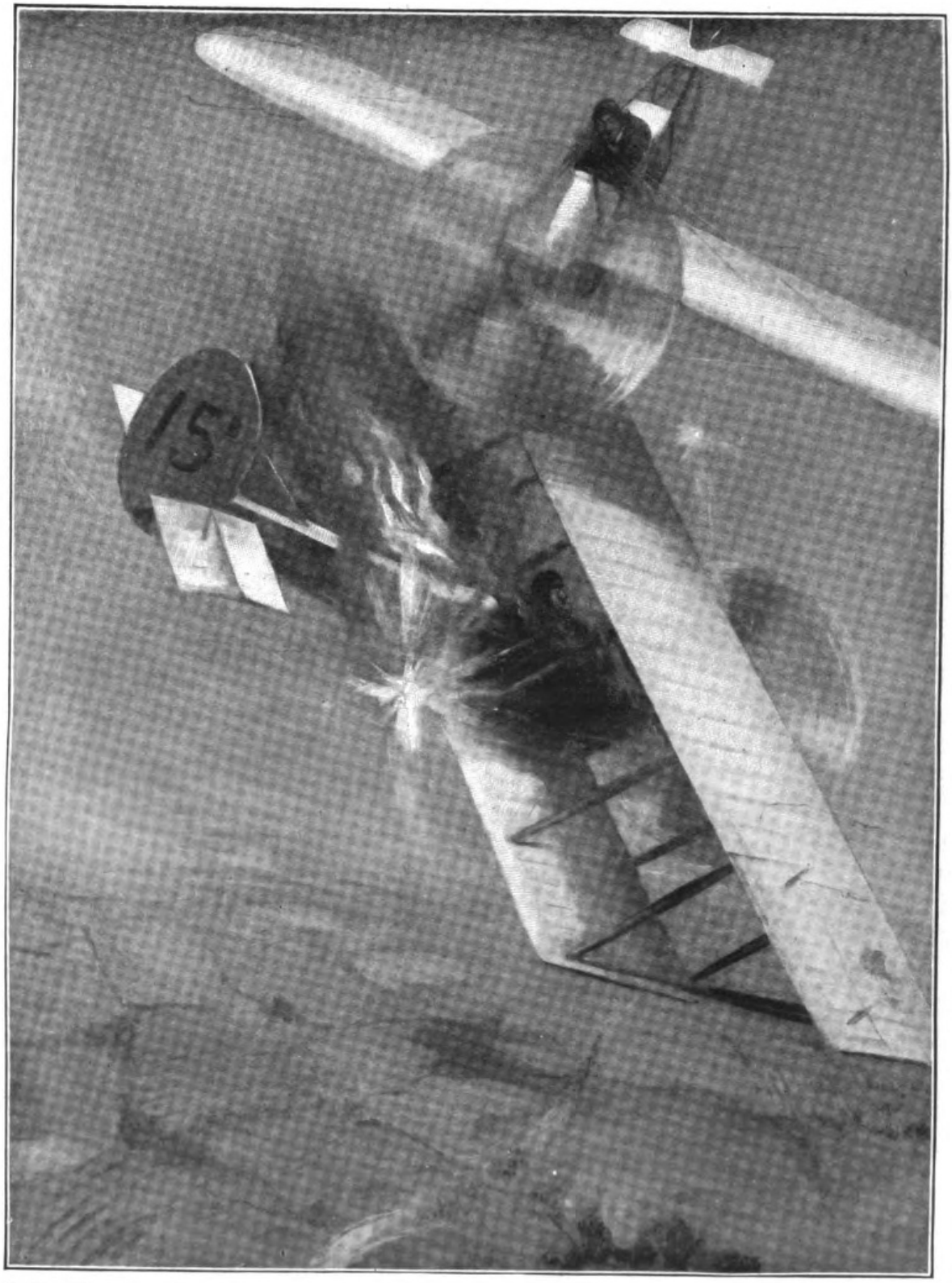
He swerved his machine and climbed. If only he could get above the Sixth Division for an instant he would throw over the message-bag, chancing its being picked up. To do this it was necessary to get higher. On his present or a lower level he would be riddled with machine-gun bullets. His adversaries on either hand rose also, but he got the lead of them.

As they rose in circles he watched for his opportunity when both should be turned from him. The moment came. He seized it and dived, with his engine running at full speed. The earth rushed upwards, its features enlarging themselves as though they swelled to burst. The brown mass of the Sixth Division spaced itself out into battalions, squadrons, below him, in front. They were exactly underneath. He flung out the message-bag with something like a prayer in his heart. On either hand his adversaries were swooping down upon him. He thought he heard the rattle of their machine-guns, but in the roar of his own engine he could not be sure.

Down and still down the three machines rushed. Suddenly he noticed the slow biplane in front—on an even lower level than himself. It was very close. He saw the pale dot of the face of the man behind the gun. If he swerved he would be under its fire in a moment. If he kept on his course he must crash into it. His decision was instant. He held on. One thought dominated him as he dived straight at it. Had his message been picked up? If not—— He saw the gleaming backs of the outstretched planes almost under him. He set his teeth for the impact. A second more—the wide stretch of yellow canvas suddenly jerked to the left and crumpled in a blinding flash. He had not touched. He swerved to the right with all his force in the tiniest fraction of a second and shot past something that fell, flaming. A shell from below had hit the biplane almost at the moment of collision.

He had a confused sense of other shells

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"A SHELL FROM BELOW HAD HIT THE BIPLANE ALMOST AT THE MOMENT OF COLLISION."

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exploding in the air. A battery below was seizing its chance to get the enemy's aircraft in a cluster, regardless of the danger to him. He continued his rush downward, feeling rather than knowing that the other two machines were in close pursuit. If he could only be certain that his message had been picked up!

He flung a glance back over his shoulder. The powerful biplane that had risen from behind the wooded hill was close upon him. Why did they not fire? He felt himself a target; was surprised not to see the gash of bullets on his machine. The explanation flashed on him. The gun had jammed. The biplane came at him as though it were itself a projectile. Its crew had desperately resolved to ram him, to sacrifice themselves rather than to allow him to bring his precious information to the ground. They were almost upon him. He swerved and dodged. The biplane shot past.

Immediately he saw the other machine close upon him—saw a spurt of fire from the muzzle of its gun. He dived. A belt of trees rushed up at him, fearfully close. Their dark foliage seemed to break into puffs of black smoke over his eyes. He swerved instinctively, and saw a meadow burst through the dark smoke, fly skyward in a mist of blood. With a last desperate effort he banked. His hands slid from the controls — everything swam. He was vaguely conscious of a heavy impact from underneath——

Something was burning his throat—he opened his eyes, gazed into a man's face close to his. Consciousness came back in a rush. He pushed away the brandy-flask that was being pressed against his teeth and struggled to his feet. Strong arms supported him. Several men were round him, looking at him. He was close to a road, and along that road he thought he saw batteries of artillery galloping at full speed. He was not certain of their reality. They passed like phantoms in his vision, wavering up and down—— He wanted to do something—to ask something—what was it? He all but fixed the elusive thought—and lost it. His hand felt for the duplicate report-book in his pocket—his desire was connected with that. The report-book had gone. Then a fragment of his intangible preoccupation floated, visible as it were, in his brain. He clutched at it.

"What—what guns are those?" he asked, thickly.

"Divisional artillery — Sixth Division," came the reply. "All right, we got your message."

The scout put his hand to his brow and then, dropping it, stared at it stupidly. It was red.

"All right," said the voice. "You're hit—but not seriously. Lie down."

The scout collected all his faculties in an attempt to bring out one more thought from the obscurity which filled his brain.

"What—what time—now?" he asked.

"Just one o'clock." The voice appeared to recede to an enormous distance, although he felt the speaker's face close to his. "They're in time — don't worry. Lie down. The ambulances are coming in a minute or two."

The scout stood, obstinately.

"The—the other—machines?"

"Bagged 'em both. You came down beautifully—like a kite." The voice sounded from worlds away.

The aviator put his hand to his head.

"In time!" He breathed the words rather than spoke them. They came like the sigh of a man utterly spent.

The man who had been supporting him turned round with a jump and focused his binoculars on the wooded hill. A crowd of white puffs was breaking out in the air above it.

The scout, left unattended, swayed with hands stretched out like a blind man. The field whirled round and round suddenly with a fearful rapidity and then rushed up and struck him.

The man with the binoculars ignored his prone body.

"Beat 'em on the post!" he shouted, in joyous excitement. "By Heaven! Beat 'em on the post!"

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# Portraits of Celebrities at Different Ages.

# LORD KITCHENER *of* KHARTUM.



AGE 16—AS A CADET.
*From a Photograph.*

WITH such grim taciturnity has Lord Kitchener always shielded himself, that even to-day, although he has passed his sixty-fourth birthday, he is still an enigma to the general public and to those who claim to know him. He has repulsed biographer and journalist as ruthlessly as he repulsed the dervishes in Egypt and the Boers in South Africa. He absolutely refuses to reveal himself, and if it was ever truthfully said of a man that he wished to be judged by deeds, not words, that man is the soldier and War Secretary who will write his name on military history even larger than did Wellington.

"My lords, I am a soldier, not a politician," he said, at the opening of his maiden speech as War Secretary in the House of Lords a couple of weeks after the war of nations broke out. There we have the keynote of his character and the secret of his success. His profession first; everything else subservient to it. He has no use for the man who thinks of anything but work when there is work to be done.

As a cadet he entered upon his profession at the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich with that



AGE 19—WITH HIS BROTHER WALTER.
*From a Photograph.*

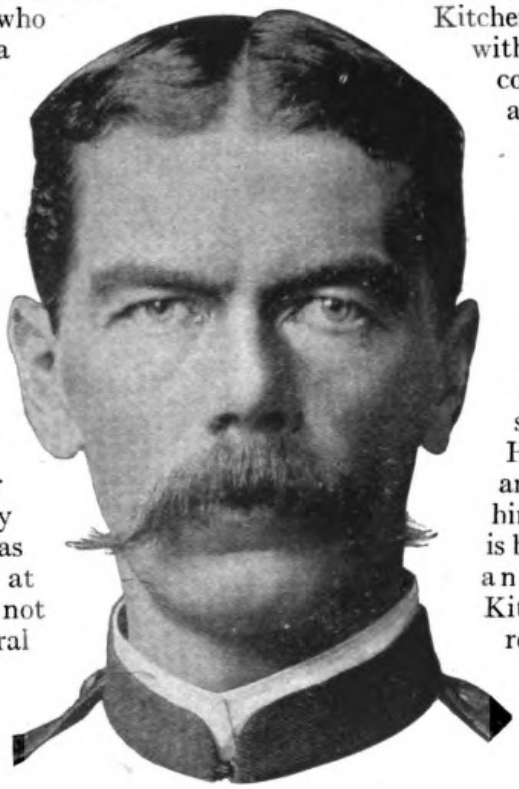


AGE 28—WHEN WORKING FOR THE PALESTINE EXPLORATION FUND.
*From a] [Photograph.*

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whole-hearted energy which has always been characteristic of the man, and it was by sheer hard work and devotion to duty that he won promotion with almost meteoric rapidity.

The son of a soldier—Lieutenant-Colonel H. H. Kitchener, who served in India both as a cavalry and infantry officer—Lord Kitchener made no mistake in his choice of a profession. A young man who, as soon as he heard of the great battles and strenuous sieges of the Franco-Prussian War of 1870, quietly slipped across the Channel to fight and gain military experience, can scarcely be said to have been lacking in martial spirit or interest. This is exactly what Kitchener did. He was not twenty years of age at the time, but he did not hesitate, and to General Chanzy, who fought so gallantly against the German hordes around Le Mans, and in whose army the future Field-Marshal enlisted, belongs the distinction of providing Kitchener with his baptism of fire.



AGE 34—WITH THE GORDON RELIEF EXPEDITION.

*Photo. Bassano.*

Kitchener's eagerness and pluck, however, might have led to the extinction of one of the greatest soldiers and military administrators Britain has ever produced, for his rush to France was viewed with great disfavour by the authorities at home. As soon as they heard that he was with General Chanzy's army they peremptorily recalled him, and to the Duke of Cambridge fell the task of administering a "severe reprimand" when the culprit reached home.

Speaking of the incident in after years, the Duke said: "I had doubts as to whether I should give the young fellow his commission. I put the question to him, 'Why did you do this?' 'Please, sir,' was the prompt reply, 'I understood that I should not be wanted for some time, and I could not be idle. I thought I might learn something.' There was no prevarication," the Duke went on to say; "the young fellow owned up so manfully that his answer saved his bacon. I saw there was real grit in him. I told him such a thing was absolutely unpardonable, and I decided that he should have his commission." And the Duke had no reason afterwards, as he more than once admitted, to regret his decision.

So far as one can gather, however, Kitchener did not impress those with whom he came into contact in his early years as possessing any distinctive abilities or characteristics. "As a boy," says his cousin, Mr. F. S. Kitchener, "Lord Kitchener was tall and lanky, quite six feet in height, and with a shy, nervous manner. He managed somehow to scramble into Woolwich. He was not high in the lists, and no one thought much of him," a description which is borne out by other relatives and friends who knew Kitchener as a boy. One refers to him as "quiet, taciturn, good at books, but taking a bad place in outdoor games and gymnastics," while another describes him as a "shy, self-contained boy, who took no part in the rough-and-tumble sports of his companions."

The grandfather of the War Secretary was a well-known London merchant, one of whose sons was the Master of the Clothworkers' Company. It was Lord Kitchener himself who reminded a pompous individual, who insisted on claiming old friendship with him on the plea that their families were friends two generations ago, that he came from a commercial stock.

"If your grandfather lived and worked with mine," said the Field-Marshal with a twinkle in his eye, "they must have been selling tea in the same shop."

Kitchener was twenty when he obtained his commission as a lieutenant in the Royal Engineers in 1871, and three years later he joined the survey of Western Palestine under Major Conder. His real chance came, however, when Sir Evelyn Wood organized the Egyptian Army in 1882. Kitchener at once volunteered for service, was appointed one of the two majors of cavalry, and did sterling work in the Nile Expedition of 1884.

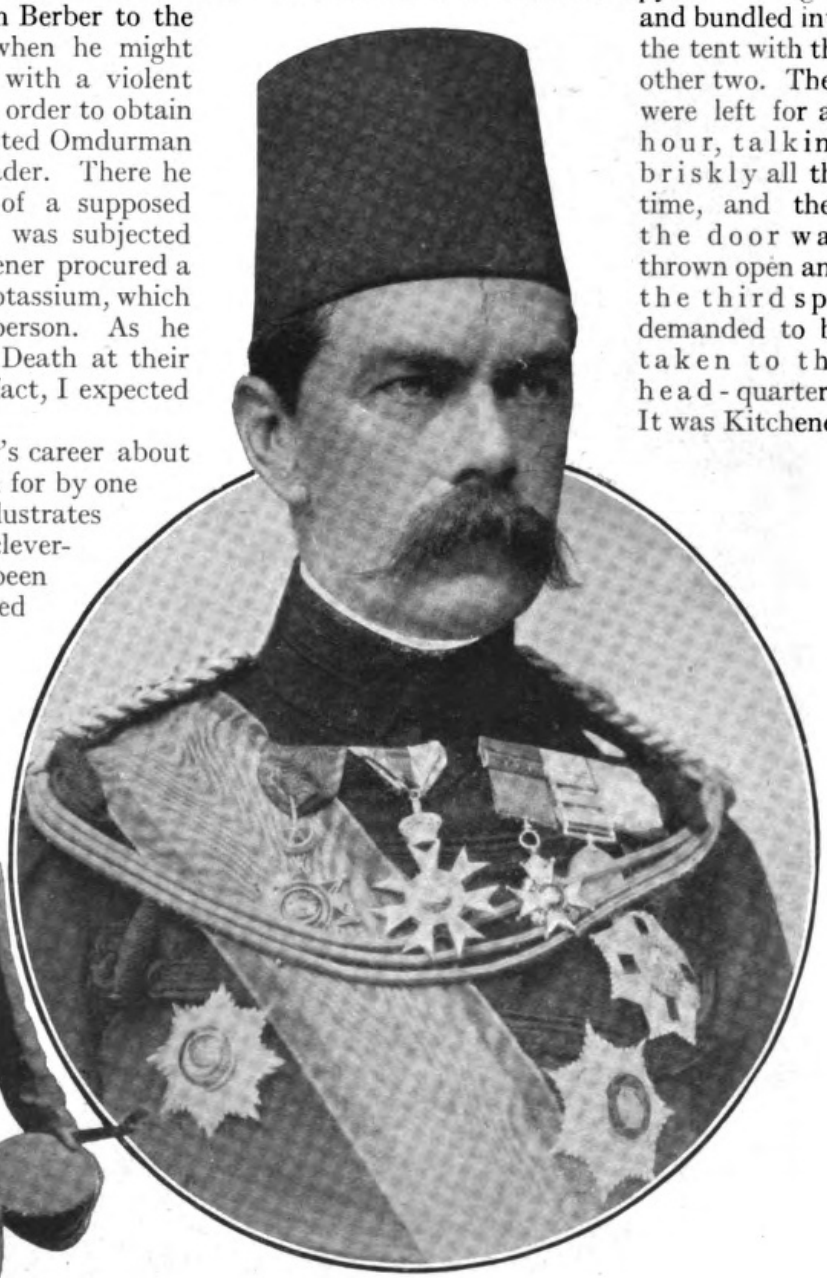
There can be no doubt that Kitchener's

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unrivalled knowledge of Egypt and the natives laid the foundation to his wonderful career.

For two years Kitchener wandered from Cairo to Abu Hamed, from Berber to the Red Sea, never knowing when he might be brought face to face with a violent death. On one occasion, in order to obtain news of the Mahdi, he visited Omdurman disguised as an Arab trader. There he witnessed the execution of a supposed spy, and the poor wretch was subjected to such torture that Kitchener procured a tiny phial of cyanide of potassium, which he concealed about his person. As he subsequently remarked, "Death at their hands I did not fear; in fact, I expected it. But such a death!"

An incident in Kitchener's career about this time, which is vouched for by one of his relatives, strikingly illustrates his personal courage and cleverness. Two Arabs had been caught, but they feigned deafness, and Kitchener could get nothing from them. They were detained in a tent. In half an hour another spy was caught, and bundled into the tent with the other two. They were left for an hour, talking briskly all the time, and then the door was thrown open and the third spy demanded to be taken to the head-quarters. It was Kitchener himself, who had, of course, found out all he wanted to know.



AGE 42—SIRDAR OF THE EGYPTIAN ARMY.
*Photo. Dittrich, Cairo.*



AGE 50—CHIEF OF STAFF AND AFTERWARDS COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF DURING THE SOUTH AFRICAN WAR.
*Photo. Duffas, Johannesburg.*

There are not a few people who contend that Kitchener's success in Egypt is not a little due to the fear with which he is regarded by the natives. Nothing could be farther from the truth. He can be inhumanly cold and stern when occasion demands; but he did not study the natives of Egypt for twenty years without learning how to secure their trust and regard, if not their affection. As British Agent-General of Egypt he made all the Egyptians, from the Khedive down to the humblest peasant, realize that he was their friend and understood their needs.

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"K. OF K."
IN A GENIAL MOOD.
*Photo. Cribb.*

One of the most striking descriptions of Lord Kitchener and his administrative work in Egypt was that of G. N. Sarruf Bey, son of the proprietor of the well-known Cairo vernacular newspaper, *Al-Mokattam*, who, during a visit to London a short time ago, said:—

"One has only to go across to the Agency in Cairo any morning to understand the hold which Lord Kitchener has secured over the Egyptians. He is accessible to all. Anybody with a grievance is free to go and lay it before him, confident of obtaining a fair and patient hearing. At the Agency one sees deputations from the villages, ten or twelve strong, headed by the mayor and the *omdeh*, or elder, who have come in their best clothes to lay some request before '*El Lord*,' as the peasants always call Lord Kitchener."

His grim, laconic humour was well illustrated by the reply he is said to have sent on one occasion to the War Office authorities, who were pressing a certain gun upon him which he did not want. "Keep the gun," he wired; "I can throw stones myself."

It may be said that Lord Kitchener has but one hobby—flowers. He loves to see the gardens of Broome Park, his place near Canterbury, in magnificent array, abloom with flowers, and to spend what leisure hours he has among them.

The house itself, a grand old seventeenth-century mansion, standing in the centre of one of the finest wooded parks in the country, is replete with treasures which Lord Kitchener has brought from India and Egypt—fabrics, skins, embroideries, and china. But it is characteristic of this "man of iron" that his private rooms contain no more luxuries than the usual soldier's work-a-day rooms and the simple camp-bed.



LORD KITCHENER AT THE PRESENT DAY.
*Photo. Bassano.*

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# THE COUNTER-IRRITANT

By E. L. WHITE.

Illustrated by E. Oakdale.

THE bedroom had looked ordinary enough in the morning; a cheerful place, filled with commonplace furniture and hung with flowered chintz. When I peeped in, during the afternoon, it had taken on a sinister and unfamiliar appearance. White sheets and cloths were spread over everything. Bowls, sponges, and mackintoshes were being arranged by a strange woman, whose costume seemed largely composed of the same cold whiteness. Under the window was drawn up a table.

The sight gave me a queer feeling in the region of the throat, for here—in a few minutes' time—one of our number was to undergo the ghastly ordeal of the Knife.

As I stood, a girl peeped over my shoulder, and then shrank away—tearing at her handkerchief.

"How awful it looks! Oh, I can't stand it! I *can't!*"

Her voice rose ominously, and the hostile-eyed woman in uniform crossed the room and shut the door in our faces. I don't blame her for her action, for if ever the principals in a grim fight were hindered by the horrified curiosity of the loafers that fringe the ring, they must have been those hastily-summoned surgeons and nurses.

In point of fact, the entire atmosphere was soaked in panic, and everyone in the house had been sopping it up since the early morning. Imagine a week-end party, in top-hole holiday spirits. Take the dominant spirit—a man of solid bone and brawn, animated by the spark of devil so dear to the hearts of women. Crumple him up suddenly with a torturing pain. Call in your specialist, and await his verdict of "Instant operation"! Do all this, and then you'll have some inkling of the consternation and funk that filled every soul in Boar's Head Court since the sudden illness of Terence Dashwood.

As I gazed in dismay at the girl beside me she began to work herself up still farther. Leila Wales was composed chiefly of the dangerous material of nerves.

She began to speak rapidly.

"I caught a sight of the specialist as he went into the dressing-room. A hateful little grey man, with cold eyes. And that awful stony nurse told me she loved her work. She's gloating over it. Oh, they're *inhuman!* We can't leave him to them!"

"All this is pure hysteria," I answered. "You must try to calm yourself. You know perfectly well that everything that science and humanity can do is being done for Dashwood. He has a fighting chance. No man need ask for more."

In my efforts to keep the demi-semi-quavers from leaping from my heart to my voice I had frosted my tone pretty liberally. Leila Wales turned on me like a fury.

"It's easy for you to talk. *You*—who haven't a finger-ache! You haven't to go under the awful knife. Oh, you make me hate you!"

With a fresh sob she tore down the corridor. I turned guiltily to meet a couple of men and a woman, who had also been drawn to the area of the operating-room. They bore, in common with everybody, the tense expression of congealed excitement.

As the woman—Cynthia May—flopped on her knees to the key-hole, in a swirl of cherry-coloured draperies, one of the fellows turned to me, reproachfully.

"At it again, Piper? Exercising your talent for wounding? At the risk of letting it rust, you might have spared that poor girl to-day. Everyone knows she's keen on Dashwood!"

Oddly enough, everyone did not. I, for one. But I did now, and from my sensations my feet and hands seemed to have been suddenly transferred to the neighbourhood of the North Pole.

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"CYNTHIA MAY ISSUED KEY-HOLE BULLETINS IN A HUSKY WHISPER."

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The little group at the door was swelling in numbers, and the ghastly excitement grew as Cynthia May issued key-hole bulletins in a husky whisper.

"I think they're wheeling him in. They're all getting in the way and crowding. I can see nothing but white. Oh, dear! I'm sure I caught the glitter of a knife. There, again! *A-ah!* Can't you all smell it?"

The sickly, clogging odour of chloroform stole into the corridor. Leila Wales, who had crept up to the group, shied off at its breath, like a colt that has stepped on a hot cinder.

We turned to watch her as she staggered away.

"She should take sal-volatile," suggested a girl.

"She takes it hard," commented another —her words making an idiotic sequence.

But Jayne—a medical student with a long, white face, like a Jack-o'-Lantern—looked grave. He riveted his attention on me as he spoke.

"It's more serious than you think. Ever noticed that girl? Hasn't she struck you as heart?"

In my painful relations with Miss Wales she had struck me as anything but heart, but I nodded, all the same.

"That vivid colour, now? All heart! And I tell you this. We all know it's touch and go with poor Dashwood. So if she keeps on working up like this, by the time the op's over she'll be pulp. If he pegs out, she—well, she won't stand the shock."

"That would be a pity."

I did not recognize the formal voice that spoke, but it must have been mine, for they all turned and glared at me.

"Can nothing be done? Can't we distract her attention?" asked Bartlett, vaguely. "Talking's no good, as we've all found out."

"Only one thing would do it," answered Jayne. "A counter-irritant."

"A what?"

We all hung on the pallid youth's words, for, unwholesome-looking brute though he was, he seemed to speak with the ring of authority.

"Anything that would set up a rival agitation. You know the effect of a shock on a raging tooth-ache. A slight accident might divert Miss Wales's attention. But, unfortunately, one could not be stage-managed on the spur of the moment."

"Why not? Surely we can do something." Bartlett was still vaguely eager.

"Because it might be dangerous. An unrehearsed contretemps might lead to unexpected results."

Pompous words! I remembered them later on.

"Well, if you really want an irritant for Miss Wales, I should think Mr. Piper would act as a very effective one."

You remember my name is Piper? Of course it was a woman who spoke. In my case, I should be very sorry for any poor measure of affection I might excite that could not pass "the love of women" with the utmost ease and romp in a winner.

Everyone laughed, with one exception. Again, myself. Nature had undoubtedly made a very poor job of my face, and perhaps it was her slackness that has made me such a fierce opponent of any feminist movement. Yet, to my mind, it was hardly humorous to be the special antipathy of an exceptionally beautiful woman.

Did I mention that Leila Wales was beautiful? Therefore, although it is generally conceded that chivalry is a dead commodity, and to say that five able-bodied men in full possession of their faculties would die for a woman, is a pure piece of sentiment —all the same we tugged at our collars miserably, and felt that to do nothing was at least bad form.

At that moment Turner, the son of the house, came out of another door.

"Clear off, every one of you, this minute!" he said, herding us along the corridor and down the broad staircase. He vouchsafed us a few crumbs of information, however.

"Good old Dashwood! Went into action game to the last. Might have been an innings at cricket."

Everyone broke into a chorus of gulps.

"Thundering good man we've got for the job. Mycroft's the best man in the North. Insignificant little chap, eh?"

As we started to sort ourselves out into restless groups, preparatory to a nomad afternoon, I drew Jayne apart.

"About Miss Wales," I said. "I admit your point of view. She wants a blister. Ahem! I'm ready to be that blister."

As he merely gaped at me, I went on.

"I pledge myself to put Miss Wales into such a fury of indignation that she won't give another thought to Dashwood until he is recalled to her thoughts."

"Really! And how do you propose to do this?"

"I propose," I answered steadily, "to—propose. To ask the beautiful and superior Miss Wales to marry—*me*. It is the only way. And, in view of my extreme popularity with women, I can guarantee the result."

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Jayne's eyes nearly bolted from his head.

"But will you get her to hear you out?"

A significant question. Shows he had gauged her exact abhorrence of my unlucky personality.

"That's the difficulty, I confess. Nothing short of locking her up with me, in a limited space, where she could not dodge my near neighbourhood, would answer the case, I fear."

Again that wretched student took me seriously.

"I'll undertake that part for you. Get her to go with you to the strong-room, to——well, say, to see a negative, and I'll lock you in, and unlock you again in five minutes' time. Will you undertake to create such an impression in those five minutes that the effects will last until the op is over?"

"It's up to me!"

Here, I must give a word of explanation. You may have noticed the somewhat peculiar name of the house — Boar's Head Court. Originally an old mansion, it had been turned into an hotel, and then back again to a family residence. The strong-room, where they used to store the visitors' valuables, was somewhere in the depths, and, now unused, was occasionally made to answer as a scratch dark-room for amateur photographers.

I went up and addressed Miss Wales, who was still tearing herself to emotional tatters.

"Come with me to the strong-room for one minute," I urged. "I have something to show you. A rather startling snap of Dashwood."

She instantly turned and followed me. Dashwood was evidently a name to conjure with. Lucky beggar—knife notwithstanding!

As we walked down the corridor that ran off at right angles from the kitchen offices, and turned down the narrow flight of steps that led to the cell, I had a fleeting recollection of the fine Dashwood who went into action game. Again I heard the chorus of gulps. Then I looked at the scornful face of Leila Wales, and am free to confess I felt I faced bigger guns. Only the chorus of sympathy was absent, although Miss Wales did her best to oblige with a sniff—one charged with triple-essence of disdain.

In we went—the door was banged, and the key grated in the lock. At the sound, Leila Wales turned sharply on me.

"Who has locked us in?"

Her voice was suspicious.

"My orders."

I spoke calmly although my heart was expanding and contracting like a concertina. I thought of the ugly, insignificant Mycroft in that upper chamber, who was carving his way through disease to cure, and I felt a subtle affinity with his repellent personality and drastic methods.

Leila went quite red. She looked at me, as though she were thinking unutterable things. But I felt a glow of congratulation, for I was positive that Dashwood was not one of them.

"Will you explain?" she asked, quietly. You all know that ominously quiet voice! "Where is the snap-shot?"

"There is none."

Seeing that I had taken away her breath, I went on rapidly.

"I merely wanted to secure the pleasure of your company free from interruption. In five minutes Jayne will return, and our *tête-à-tête* will be over."

Her breath came back with a rush, and then —she began to talk. I'm putting it mildly, leaving you to guess at the full torrent of her eloquence. But it's my duty to give you a hint, and add you might find it quicker to guess what she didn't say.

As I listened to her flow of indignation it gave me something akin to a prick of pride to feel I had power to call up such a vivid display of personal feeling. But my pride was swallowed almost immediately in a pang of pity. Just as the utilitarian deplored the wasted motive power of the Falls of Niagara, so I saddened to think such splendid force should be turned merely to slate a fellow-mortal. Well, the gods be praised! At least, she'd clean forgotten Dashwood.

Rapidly I made my plans. It would be better to keep my thunder-bolt for the final minute, as it would have to last for some time after her release. My course was plainly to inflame her for its reception.

I took out my watch.

"I have something important to say," I remarked, "but it is too good to be wasted on you in your present hysterical condition. I will give you five minutes in which to find yourself. Then you may be able to do it, and me, justice."

She gave a violent start of temper. I'm positive Mycroft never jabbed home more surely. Stuffing her fingers in her ears she faced me furiously.

"I don't intend to listen to a single word. Nothing you can say would interest me. Everything you say is odious. Your conduct is inexplicable, even in you. I don't believe you ought to be at large. You ought to be locked up."

"I am," I reminded her.

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In the ruby glow of the lantern we glared at each other. Her eyes were dark with resentment. Then, to escape from her gaze, I watched the minutes play "Follow-My-Leader" slowly round the white face of my watch. I wondered what it would feel like, for one minute, to be a fine lump of a chap like Dashwood—to swagger instead of cringe, inwardly at least—to know success instead of failure. Odd to think that even now he was just so much helpless tissue under the knife.

A sound roused me from my reflections. It was the drag of Jayne's footsteps coming to release us.

I moistened my tongue. It was now or never. The cords began to swell on my forehead like leather after rain.

"What I mean to say to you——" I began.

"I'm not listening," broke in Leila, furtively removing one finger-stopper.

"Is to—— Good heavens! What's that?"

We heard the sound of something pitching down the stairs like a half-ton of coal.

"What's up, Jayne?" I sang out.

A mighty amount of heaving, slipping, and soliloquy followed. Then Jayne's voice answered:—

"Caught my foot—that's all, and fallen down. Hurt my leg, too. Wait a bit!"

As we held our breaths we heard the sound of a smothered groan.

"Crepitus!" Jayne spoke in a tone of gloomy triumph. "I've broken it all right. I should diagnose it as a simple fracture."

"Yes. Sorry. What about us?"

"I know, I know. My head's swimming a bit. I've dropped the key somewhere, and the candle went out when I fell. Can't feel it anywhere. But—it's all right. I'll crawl up and let the others know. You'll be let out, sooner or later."

We heard him drag himself painfully up the steps. Then, all at once, the rustling and scuffling stopped abruptly.

I slued my head round at Leila, but her ears were evidently not so keen as mine. She had not grasped the fact that Jayne had fainted.

You don't seem impressed, although this is the very crux of my yarn—what I've been leading up to from the first. I'm not surprised, however, for I didn't tumble to it myself, at first. But in less than two minutes I had run my head against the fact with staggering force.

At first flush it sounds harmless enough. Jayne was bound to come to, sooner or later, and it was only a question of waiting to be liberated. Sooner or later. In point of fact, *too late.*

Ever tried covering a lighted candle with a wine-glass and watching its flame flicker out? That was our position exactly. The strong-room—a mite of a place—was absolutely air-tight.

We knew this and, when developing our plates, always left the door ajar, as there was practically no light in the passage outside. Jayne's promise to let us out in five minutes was based on the same knowledge.

His words came back to me in that moment —"An unrehearsed contretemps might lead to unexpected results." I could have laughed at the simplicity of the events which had turned our counter-irritant into a deadly poison. The side-issue had swollen to monstrous proportions, completely engorging the primary tragedy of the operation.

I'm no scientist—merely an unprepossessing individual with a nervous system for ever on the hop. So I could make no rough calculations as to how soon we two should exhaust the air. Nor did it seem feasible to pack up my share and, with traditional nobility, proffer it to my companion. But it was a fact that we had been draining our supply hard for over five minutes. It seemed to me that even in that moment, as we waited, the air thickened visibly, like milk when you drop in rennet.

To one thing, however, I was pledged. Leila must remain in ignorance until just before the end. I could not sling her blindfolded into Eternity, but at least she should be spared the torture of fore-knowledge until the last possible moment.

I thought all this over quietly as I faced the situation. To my mind, in real life, one takes a stunning blow quietly. It may be that the brain is too dead to cope with the position. Or it may be that, without our knowledge, the spark of immortality imprisoned within us is straining to be free. In any case I know that, bar an under-current of horror, I viewed the affair in a detached, critical way.

Then I looked at Leila. Brown hair, vivid in the red light. Grey eyes with a wash of blue. Ripe, rounded cheeks. I wanted to stamp the picture indelibly on my mind, so that if we missed each other in Shadow-land I might remember her through the ages to be. It seemed to me, however, that she was eyeing me suspiciously, so I returned to my former tactics of tickling her animosity. Never was a sorrier task given to mortal—this petty sparring—as preparation for the

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"A BUZZ OF VOICES AROSE, AND IN LESS

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THAN A TRICE WE WERE IN THE PASSAGE."

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eternal "Good-bye." Instead, I wanted to ——but, never mind!

"As we've still a little time together," I said, with a ghastly double meaning, "I should like to ask you something. Why, ever since we've met, have you treated me with such persistent dislike? There is no reason for so much bitterness and disdain. Remember the adage—'A cat may look at a king.' I may reasonably claim superiority to a cat."

"Why? For one thing, you haven't nine lives."

The flippant retort was so sinister a reminder that I drew a long breath. The next minute I cursed myself for reckless waste.

"Nevertheless," I went on, "I have a little value as a human being. On the other hand, you are not a king. You are just a woman—one among many. What are you so proud of? Looks? In England alone there are hundreds of women prettier than you."

I did not believe it, but I rejoiced to see the angry light coming back to her eye.

"Thousands!" I was growing reckless with success.

She wiped her face. But, thank Heaven! she did not know *why* she did it. I did, for to my mind the air was growing stale as last night's smoke.

"And you're proud of your attainments," I proceeded, turning the knife round again. "In the name of common sense, why? Why should you give yourself airs on the strength of being able to speak French and German? Any half-starved Swiss waiter is a better linguist than you."

Again Leila Wales used her handkerchief.

"When I first met you," she said, "I knew you were a horrid, snubbing man. But you are even horrider than I thought. I put down your hateful air of superiority to the fact that I worked in the Woman's Movement."

"Woman's Movement?" I waved my hand in the air, and noticed with a shock how the fingers trembled. "It simply amounts to the fact that you're doing badly work that men would do well."

"What a lovely reason!" Leila seemed to be enjoying herself. "What proof have you ever given of masculine superiority? You are a sneering cynic, who have never lifted a finger on anyone's behalf!"

For the life of me I could not keep back a smile at that. When one considers the exact position, there was unconscious humour in her charge.

But even as I smiled, certain disquieting sensations were crowding over me. I could not keep from fidgeting, and my breath was growing faint and shallow.

"You are very clever at finding fault," went on Leila. "It would be quite interesting to hear what you expect of a woman?"

I would rather not have spoken, for I knew my voice would let me down. But I took up the challenge, speaking in reedy tones.

"I'd rather have a woman who darned stockings instead of being a blue-stocking. I'd rather her be homely than beautiful. I'd rather she spoke one language—her own—kindly and gently, than all the languages in the world."

It was no good. I had to stop. There was a singing in my ears and a mist before my eyes. My horrible suspicions were fulfilled. I was going under first.

Well—now she would have to know! But, as I sought for words, she turned sharply round on me.

"What's the matter?"

There was such an unusual note of sympathy in her voice that I forgot all.

"Leila," I said, "what I wanted to say to you was this: I loved you from the first moment I saw you. I shall always love you!"

To my astonishment she caught my hand.

"Then *why* have you been so hateful and superior, John—dear?"

*John!* She had called me by my name! And tacked something else on as well.

Before I could grasp the significance of her words there was a rattle at the door, a gust of fresh air that almost knocked us over, and the light of a lamp. It seemed to me that a crowd of faces looked in at us. A buzz of voices arose, and in less than a trice we were in the passage. I saw Jayne, pallid and limping, and then I realized that Turner was speaking.

"Just over!" he cried. "A splendid success. Everything O.K."

I stared blankly at Leila, who held my hand.

"Good gracious!" she exclaimed. "The operation. Why, I'd completely forgotten it!"

The faces round us broke into significant smiles.

"Aha! The counter-irritant!" said one man.

"Good man, Piper! Congratulate you on its success!" said another.

But he did not know then exactly why I was to be congratulated. Neither did any of them know, until later, why I suddenly pitched forward and fainted.

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# Black "Sherlocks."

## THE NATIVE TRACKERS OF AUSTRALIA.

By D. J. McNamara.

Illustrated by G. Henry Evison.

SOME months since an article appeared in THE STRAND MAGAZINE describing the gifts of the Bedouin in tracking camels and also fugitives from justice. It occurred to the writer that many readers might be interested in hearing of feats equalling or even surpassing these performed by the dark subjects of the King in distant Australia.

Like all races that depend upon hunting for subsistence—the Bedouin, the North American Indian, etc.—the Australian aborigine has developed marvellous powers of sight and hearing. Especially in the arid interior and what is termed the "West Coast" (skirting the Great Australian Bight), where the country is almost utterly destitute of plants suitable for human food, the capacity of these organs has been developed to an almost incredible degree. The marvels about to be narrated are, however, attested by men of the highest character, of extensive and intimate acquaintance with the lives and habits of the blacks, and in some cases with considerable training in the methods of scientific investigation.

Captain S. A. White, an enthusiastic ornithologist, who has travelled hundreds of miles in the "Dead Heart of Australia" in pursuit of his favourite hobby, had frequent evidence of the wonderful skill shown by the natives in following the tracks of living creatures. Another competent witness is Mr. W. G. South, Protector of Aborigines in South Australia, who has spent upwards of twenty years in various parts of the bush, and who has occasion to utilize their wonderful powers in the detection of crime at Alice Springs and other places. To these may be added the testimony of many retired mounted constables who have been stationed in various parts, from Port Darwin in the north to Fowler's Bay on the south-west coast of South Australia. Owners and managers of cattle and sheep-stations also bear witness to the unapproachable skill of the aborigines in picking up and following tracks, from that of a camel to those of creatures like lizards, and even so small as ants.

To realize to the full the wonderful skill of these black trackers a consideration of the nature of the country is necessary. Vast wastes of sand-ridges gradually merging into the smooth, hard surfaces of stony plateaux occupy a great portion of Central Australia. These plateaux are, in parts, like a street pavement. In what is called "gibber" country great stretches of rounded ironstone pebbles are pressed closely together forming a natural mosaic quite impervious to the pressure of the heaviest feet. Elsewhere a low, stunted scrub of mallee or mulga interspersed with spinifex or salt-bush renders progress almost impossible. The ground is littered with dry leaves and dead bark, on which it would appear that no impression could be left. Yet in such country as here described the unerring instinct of the black,



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with his senses sharpened by necessity, enables him to pick up a trail and follow it undeviatingly for hundreds of miles.

Dire necessity, as hinted above, is the inexorable teacher who, through generations, has ruthlessly eliminated all who fail to pass the severest test. This wonderful faculty is, therefore, the bequest of ages of natural selection. But early training is called upon to aid. As soon as they can walk the "piccaninnies" are taught to recognize and follow up the tracks of small animals. It is the only trade they have to learn. Just as among civilized men a knowledge of engineering or architecture demands a severe course of early training followed by years of experience, so with these wild children of Nature, no effort is spared till the tracking becomes an instinct. With the help of the fingers, the toes, the heel, and the hand, or bits of stick, the tracks of various animals are made in the sand with marvellous fidelity to the original. The children are required to identify them and to reproduce.

With very young lads another method is sometimes used. An area of sand is smoothed over, the lads turn their backs, then an ant or small lizard is let loose on this patch. The youngsters turn round and are required to indicate where the trail began, to follow its course, and to name the creature. Constant practice in these amusements and an occasional experience in actual tracking for food give to eyes and ears unspoiled by the close contacts of civilization a keenness and power of discrimination that seem almost supernatural.



"WHETHER ON FOOT OR HORSEBACK A NATIVE TRACKER KEEPS HIS EYES FIXED ON THE GROUND."



Whether on foot or horseback a native tracker keeps his eyes fixed on the ground. "Often when riding," says Mr. South, "a grunt would break from his dusky companion. 'What name?' I would inquire. 'Snake been walk'; or 'Mountain debbil come 'long a here.'" The so-called "mountain devil" with its tail and its feet makes the tiniest and most indistinct of tracks—merely a scratch on the hard ground. If it is a

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lizard's mark they will tell you the species, though no bigger than your little finger. They will follow it to the hole, but seem to know when it is at home, for they never dig out a hole unless to find the creature they seek.

The statement that the trail of an ant could be picked up and followed was received even here with incredulity, but the fact seems to be amply established by the consensus of competent observers. Captain S. A. White relates that when leaving for Central Australia he was asked by Mr. A. M. Lea, entomologist of the South Australian Museum, to procure as many species of ants as possible. To this end the natives were employed. They followed the tiny tracks over dried mulga leaves and shelving rocks to their holes, or under stones, where the naturalist discovered them. But still more wonderful, they could describe the ant from the traces it made long before the creature itself was found.

In following the trail of larger animals they proceed unerringly and without pause, often at a brisk trot and over the hard, stony country above described. They will single out and follow the prints of a particular horse, although it has been crossed and recrossed by those of a mob, even after the lapse of a week or more. When the animals are at the station they learn to individualize the impressions made by each separate animal, and they never forget them. Mr. D. J. Beck tells of the feats of a black fellow named Bonaparte, whom he kept at Milo Station. The property contained a paddock of ninety-six square miles, mostly of thick mulga, with some burnt patches. If you told Bonaparte you wanted a particular horse from a mob he would pick up his tracks and bring him in the same day. A white man might spend a week without finding the animal. Bonaparte knew the tracks of every individual horse on the run.

The black boys, setting out at the first streak of dawn, can follow camels over the "gibber" country for miles and without hesitation. When asked how they did this one would stoop down and show a blade of dry grass bent over the edge of a stone, or a pebble detached from the setting of clay in which it was embedded.

In tracking through scrub, where scarcely any impression will be left on the dry bark and withered leaves, the black can follow the trail by noting the displacement of the bark, the snapping of the smallest twig, the pushing aside of the boughs, and their instinct is as unfailing as on the stony plateaux. A story is told of a supposed lunatic followed for miles through the scrub, although he had taken the precaution to wrap his feet in bagging.

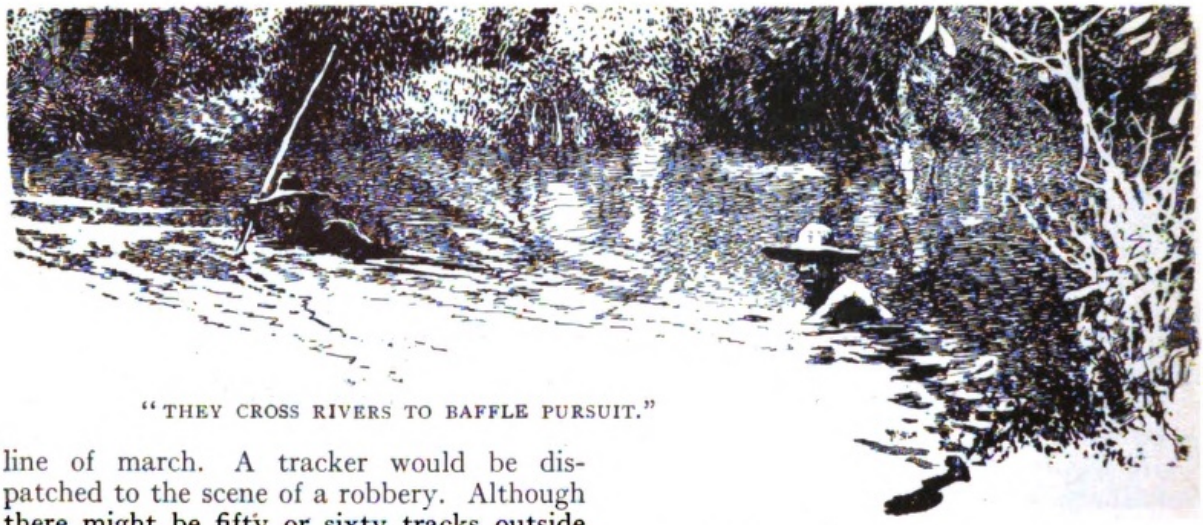


"HE HAD TAKEN THE PRECAUTION TO WRAP HIS FEET IN BAGGING."

But the genius of the black tracker is especially conspicuous in following the trail of their wily comrades guilty of murder, theft, or cattle-spearing. These delinquents know all tricks of the game, and do everything to baffle pursuit. They take to the hard, stony country, to the scrub, cross rivers, walk backwards for miles, clothe their feet with slippers of emu-feathers, and so forth. Seldom, however, have they managed to elude the remorseless pursuit of the black tracker. An escaped prisoner, who was being conveyed from the interior to Port Augusta, slipped away one night near the Queensland border. The tracker followed him for nearly three hundred miles over hard, stony country, showed where a comrade with two horses had met the fugitive, how he had ridden sixty miles without dismounting, where he had turned the horse loose, and many other particulars which he had gleaned from observation of the tracks, which he read like an open book. A tracker followed a cattle-spearer, who had escaped from Alice Springs lock-up, down a hard clay-pan, over a stony ridge, till he at length came up with him. The trail was followed without a pause. A pebble slightly displaced, a bit of trampled grass, or the broken bough of a tree were quite sufficient indications.

A retired police-constable once stationed at Fowler's Bay gives instances of the skill of the blacks in picking out individual tracks from those of a crowd. Many tribes in the vicinity, to the number of five hundred or more, would visit the bay to celebrate tribal rites and ceremonies. On their return homewards they would plunder the huts on their

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"THEY CROSS RIVERS TO BAFFLE PURSUIT."

line of march. A tracker would be dispatched to the scene of a robbery. Although there might be fifty or sixty tracks outside and the tracks of some half-dozen within he would quickly pitch upon some footprints and name the thief. He would follow them for hundreds of miles, among crowds of other tracks, till the perpetrator was overtaken or till the tracker was forced to return for want of water. In the latter case he would resume the pursuit many months afterwards. When told by white troopers that no tracks were visible: "You tchee" (see), picking up a fragment of salt-bush half an inch long. Looking at it for a moment: "Him been go 'long two sleeps ago." He could also tell whether the fugitives had passed the spot by day or by night, and whether they were in a hurry or taking it easy. Even from a body of sixty he would pick out the tracks of an individual. Riding along, you exclaim: "What track that one, Billy?" Instantly he would reply, "Him Munga," or "Yarri," or whoever it might be. This is sometimes explained by the fact that the impression of the big toe is characteristic of each individual. Following the tracks of some murderers, the tracker would point out the spot where the deed was done and how far the body was carried. This was most probably inferred from the deeper impressions made under the additional weight. In the same way they are able to discriminate between the tracks of a cow, a camel, or a mule.



"THE BLACK TRACKER WOULD POINT OUT THE SPOT WHERE THE DEED WAS DONE."

Tracks have been picked up and followed after the lapse of twelve months in country that had meanwhile been grazed over by cattle and sheep. On another occasion some natives were followed for sixty miles, although for two miles they had never put foot on ground, but had swung like monkeys from branch to branch through the mallee scrub, and this tree-travelling was done backwards.

There was a lively controversy in the Press as to the comparative powers of the black tracker and the white man bred in the bush, but the balance of testimony was decidedly in favour of the full-blooded aborigine. Even a slight contact with white settlers causes these marvellous powers of the "untutored savage" to atrophy from want of constant exercise.

The aborigines are skilled naturalists, knowing the names, properties, and life history of the native plants and animals within miles of their habitat, and readily distinguishing the various species. They are also skilled astronomers, having their own picturesque names for the southern constellations, and associating quaint legends therewith. Their skill in mimicry is perfect, and one can readily recognize an acquaintance from their imitation of his voice, gesture, and gait.

It seems a pity that these great natural gifts are not more availed of by scientific investigators.

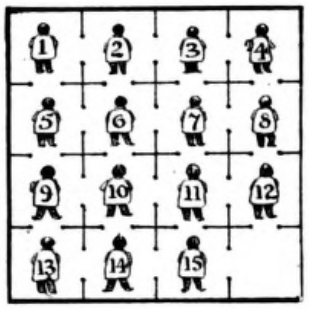
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# PERPLEXITIES.

## By HENRY E. DUDENEY.

### 220.—EXERCISING THE SPIES.

THE illustration represents the plan of a prison with sixteen cells all communicating with open doors. It will be seen that fifteen cells are occupied by spies with distinctive numbers on their backs. As one cell is empty they are allowed to pass from cell to cell on the condition that no two prisoners are ever in any cell at the same time. As a little exercise, and to while away the tedium of their restraint, the spies attempt to arrange themselves so as to form a knight's string—that is, so that No. 2 shall be a chess knight's move from No. 1, No. 3 a knight's move from No. 2, and so on. Whether or not they will succeed in doing this before peace is declared is uncertain, but the reader may like to try the puzzle with counters Wnen accomplished, an attempt should be made to discover the fewest possible moves that are necessary.




### 221.—THE WAR-HORSE.

"YES," said Farmer Wurzel, "I sold one horse to the Army. He cost me thirteen pounds, but after paying for his keep I let the military people have him for thirty pounds."

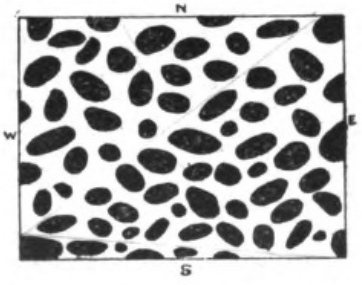
"Then you made a nice little profit?"

"Profit!" exclaimed the farmer, indignantly. "I lost just half the price I paid for the horse and one-quarter of the cost of his keep."

Now, how much did Wurzel lose on this patriotic transaction?

### 222.—AVOIDING THE MINES.

HERE we have a portion of the North Sea thickly sown with mines by the enemy. It is said that one of our gallant cruisers made a safe passage through them from south to north in two straight courses, without striking a single mine. Take your pencil and try to discover how it is done. Go from the bottom of the chart to any point you like on the chart in a straight line, and then from that point to the top in another straight line without touching a mine.




### 223.—THE DESPATCH-RIDER.

IF an army forty miles long advances forty miles while a despatch-rider gallops from the rear to the front, delivers a despatch to the commanding general, and returns to the rear, how far has he to travel?

### 224.—A BATTLE SCENE CHARADE.

A SENTRY, with an eager eye,
  And steady step and slow,
Walked o'er my *first*, whilst thickly fell
  The downy flakes of snow.

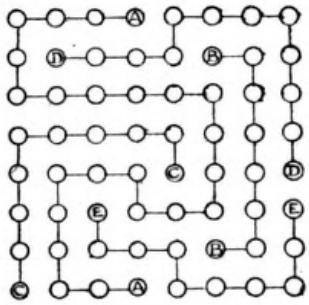
His face was thin, his aspect sad,
  For fierce the war had raged,
And long it was since my *second* had
  His hungering lips engaged.

At length there was a rustling;
  He challenged the parole.
Yet there came to him no answer,
  But the fluttering of my *whole*.

## Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles.

### 215.—THE FIVE REGIMENTS.

IN the illustration, in which the roads not used are omitted for the sake of clearness, the routes of the five regiments are shown. No two regiments ever go along the same road.




### 216.—THE BASKET OF POTATOES.

MULTIPLY together the number of potatoes, the number less one, and twice the number less one; then divide by 3. Thus 50, 49, and 99 multiplied together make 242,550, which, divided by 3, gives us 80,850 yards as the correct answer. The boy would thus have to travel forty-five miles and fifteen-sixteenths—a nice little recreation after a day's work.

### 217.—A CHESS PUZZLE.

BLACK'S last move was P (from Q B 2) to Q B 4, which pawn White took with his knight, then standing at K 4. Replace White knight at K 4 and Black pawn at Q B 4, then play P takes P *en passant*, discovered mate.

### 218.—CONCERNING A CHEQUE.

IF you set to work under the notion that there were only pounds and shillings—no pence—in the amount, a solution is impossible. The amount must have been £5 11s. 6d. He received £11 5s. 6d., and after he had spent half a crown there would remain the sum of £11 3s., which is twice the amount of the cheque.

### 219.—THRICE BEHEADED.

NASCENT—ASCENT—SCENT—CENT.

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# THE DANCING WATER, THE SINGING STONE, and the TALKING BIRD.

AN ITALIAN STORY FOR CHILDREN.

Told in English by
E. DYKE.

Illustrated by
H. R. MILLAR.



ONCE there lived a very wise king, who had a son, a young prince, who was brave, clever, and kind-hearted.

"Father," he would often say, "tell me where the wicked men live, that I may go and kill them."

"Alas, my son," answered his wise father, "they are everywhere. You will meet with too many in the course of your life."

"Tell me, at least," persisted the boy, "where the very worst man of all lives. I will begin by killing him."

And one day his father made this reply:—

"Well, since you wish to know, he lives in Hindostan, in the island of Ceylon. He is the giant Magock, who has ten heads. The wretch has imprisoned in his castle the Princess Sita, a charming girl whom he has snatched from her parents in order to make her his wife."

"I will kill him!" cried the prince. "I will rescue Princess Sita."

"Be careful," said the old man. "Before you can kill the giant, you must find the means of getting to him. He is very cautious. When he falls asleep, one of his heads keeps awake and is always on the watch. He will demand of you three things, and if you do not instantly give them to him he will tear you in pieces."

"What are these things?"

"A flask of the water that dances, a stone that sings, and a bird that talks."

"And if I bring him these?"

"He will put you to one other trial. If

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you are able to bend the bow which he will put into your hands, he will own that he is beaten, and will throw himself into the sea."

"Farewell, then, father; I am off!" said the young prince.

"Heaven aid you, my son."

Before starting on his perilous journey, the prince bathed in the Yellow River. Then, armed only with a sword, he set off in the direction of Ceylon.

At last he saw in front of him the mountain called Néra. Its peak glitters more brilliantly than the most splendid diamonds. The prince saw from afar the four sides of it sparkling in the sunshine. The northern slope was red, the southern yellow, that on the west was white, that on the east black. The prince recollected how once, when he was a little child, his nurse had told him that a great river fell down from the sky upon Mount Néra, and formed there Lake Manasa, the home of swans and wild ducks. "If," thought the prince, "there really is somewhere water that dances, this might be it."

Having come to the foot of the mountain, he began at once to climb it, and in due time he reached the glacier zone. The radiance which appeared from below like the glitter of precious stones came really from vast fields of eternal snow. Still higher mounted the prince, until he came to the shores of Lake Manasa, into which falls the river from the sky. Four enormous rocks, each bearing the head of an animal, divide the waters, so as to form four great streams. To the south the Ganges flows from a rock with a cow's head; westward the River Otus springs from a rock with a horse's head. To the north, from the rock-head of a tiger, comes forth the Tigris, and to the east a rock with an elephant's head is the starting-point of the Yellow River.



"TO THE EAST A ROCK WITH AN ELEPHANT'S HEAD IS THE STARTING-POINT OF THE YELLOW RIVER."

Raising his eyes, the prince saw on the farther shore a throne of coral, adorned with sea-weeds and lotus-leaves. A young woman of dazzling beauty sat upon the throne. On her head she wore a magnificent golden diadem; in her hand was a harp; her right foot rested upon the head of a huge fish. This was Ganga, the goddess of the River Ganges.

The prince approached respectfully, and as he came near to her Ganga spoke to him.

"You are, I know," she said, "a good and brave young prince. You deserve a reward,

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and I should like to do something for you. Are you not looking for the dancing water?"

"Yes, mighty goddess!"

"Then you must know that you have found it. *I* am the dancing water! I rush down as a torrent and change myself into a river. I leap in cascades, I dart forward with a dash and a crash; and, at last, I glide gently over the plains. If you wish to make sure that I am the dancing water, watch me now."

The goddess descended the steps of her throne, drawing sweet sounds from the light harp which she carried. Then she hovered over the lake and fluttered about on its surface. Little by little the fascination of her graceful dance drew after her all the creatures of the place. The swans, the wild ducks, the big fish twirled round and round, dancing on the water. The heads of animals which topped the great rocks, charmed by the music of the harp, joined in with their voices. The cow began to low, the horse to neigh, the elephant to trumpet, the tiger to roar. At the end of a few moments Ganga ceased to dance. She went towards the shore, and put into the prince's hand a crystal flask.

"Here," she said, "is some of the dancing water."

She re-seated herself on her throne, placed her foot on the great fish, and gradually disappeared behind a veil of cloud.

Now that the prince saw this precious flask actually in his hand, he no longer doubted the success of his adventure. But as he had still to procure two other things before he could encounter the giant Magock, he resolved to continue his journey in search of the talking bird and the singing stone.

On he walked for a long, long time, until he came at last to a broad river. In the water, not far from the shore, motionless on one leg, stood a large Egyptian ibis. The young man, having never heard of this mysterious and sacred bird, took it to be a stork. The beautiful creature was scanning the bottom of the river with his piercing eye, in the hope of finding some mother-of-pearl.

The prince kept his eyes upon the ibis, and saw him draw out of the water one pearl, then two pearls, then ten, then twenty. All these the bird laid out carefully on the sand, where, flashing in the sunshine, they showed more delicately glistening, shimmering colours than those of the rainbow.

The ibis then joined the pearls together in the form of a bracelet. When he had finished fashioning this priceless ornament, he made a friendly sign to the prince, evidently inviting him to come and take it. The prince, who thought he must be dreaming, went forward, whereupon the ibis opened his beak, and said distinctly: "Si-ta!"

The prince recollected that this was the name of the unfortunate princess, the captive of Magock.

"Yes," he exclaimed, laying his hand on his heart, "I will deliver the lovely and unhappy Sita, and I understand, kind bird, that you have made this splendid bracelet for her, and that you wish me to be the bearer of it. But, Lord Bird, since you talk so well, perhaps you can tell me where I may find the singing stone?"

The ibis made no direct reply, but he clacked his beak, spread his huge wings, and cried: "Roc! Roc! Roc!"

Immediately the prince saw a black speck in the sky, which grew bigger and bigger until it came down to earth beside the ibis. It was a kind of eagle, of tremendous size.

The prince promptly drew his sword, in order to protect the ibis, but this did not alarm Roc, who seized both man and bird with his strong talons, and, quick as lightning, flew away with them across the Isthmus of Suez and over Cairo; then, after turning round three times, he darted with a loud cry to the highest of the Pyramids.

Here he put down his passengers. The prince saw that he was close to the enormous granite Sphinx. The ibis quickly made his way to the Sphinx, and seemed to be absorbed in reading an ancient inscription engraved on one of its immense cheeks, when he suddenly spoke. "Night!" he exclaimed, and at once the sun sank below the horizon. The Sphinx now lay in shadow, and from it, as from the breast of a living being, came forth music most exquisite and sweet.

"Heaven be praised!" cried the joyful prince, who was still standing on the pyramid. "Oh, thank you, talking bird! It is through you that I have found the singing stone."

He hastened down, ran to the Sphinx, and seized a heavy bar of iron which lay on the ground close by. With this bar the prince hammered at the Sphinx and, making a great effort, broke off its granite nose. Thus disfigured, the poor Sphinx shed tears of rage. Tears, however, were of no avail, and ever since that sad night it has been noseless.

But it was a glad night for the prince.

"Magock will be hard to please," he said, "if he is not satisfied with what I bring him. Only how am I to get to his castle?"

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Again the ibis called, "Roc! Roc!" and again appeared the big bird. He took up the prince and the ibis, and brought them in a few hours to the island of Ceylon.

Giant Magock was asleep. Nine of his heads had closed their eyes, while the tenth kept guard, with ears awake to the slightest sound. Princess Sita, half dead with grief and terror, lay in a gloomy dungeon, praying that a deliverer might be sent to her.

Suddenly the guards on the watch around the castle saw in the air an exceedingly large bird, which with one wide swoop of his wing cleared gardens and courts, and put down the prince and the ibis at the castle door. So sudden and unexpected was the arrival of the two strangers that the servants had no time to give the alarm. The prince entered calmly, and called to the giant.

"Who opened the door to you?" inquired Magock, savagely.

"Nobody," replied the prince. "I let myself in."

"Indeed, my noble guest! Then no doubt you have brought some water to refresh me?"

"Precisely," answered the prince, offering the flask to the giant.

Magock turned pale, for at the first glance he had recognized the dancing water.

"You know," he said, "that I require three things. Where are the others?"

"Here is one of them, the stone that sings," said the prince, showing the nose of the Sphinx, which sniffed in a most disagreeable manner.

"Pretty sort of music that," growled the giant.

"It is the funeral march which will accompany you to your tomb," cried the prince, in a voice of thunder which shook the windows. "Repent, Magock," he added, "for you have not another hour to live."

"I—repent? Never!"

"Then you shall die at once."

"Who says so?"

"*I! I! I!*" exclaimed the ibis, coming forward.

"The talking bird! Oh, oh, oh! I must perish!" howled the giant.

Then he remembered that he had one more chance. He rose, took the bow which he used in battle, and handed it to the prince.



"WITH THIS BAR THE PRINCE HAMMERED AT THE SPHINX."



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"Bend this bow," he said, "which the united strength of ten men has failed to bend, and I will acknowledge myself beaten."

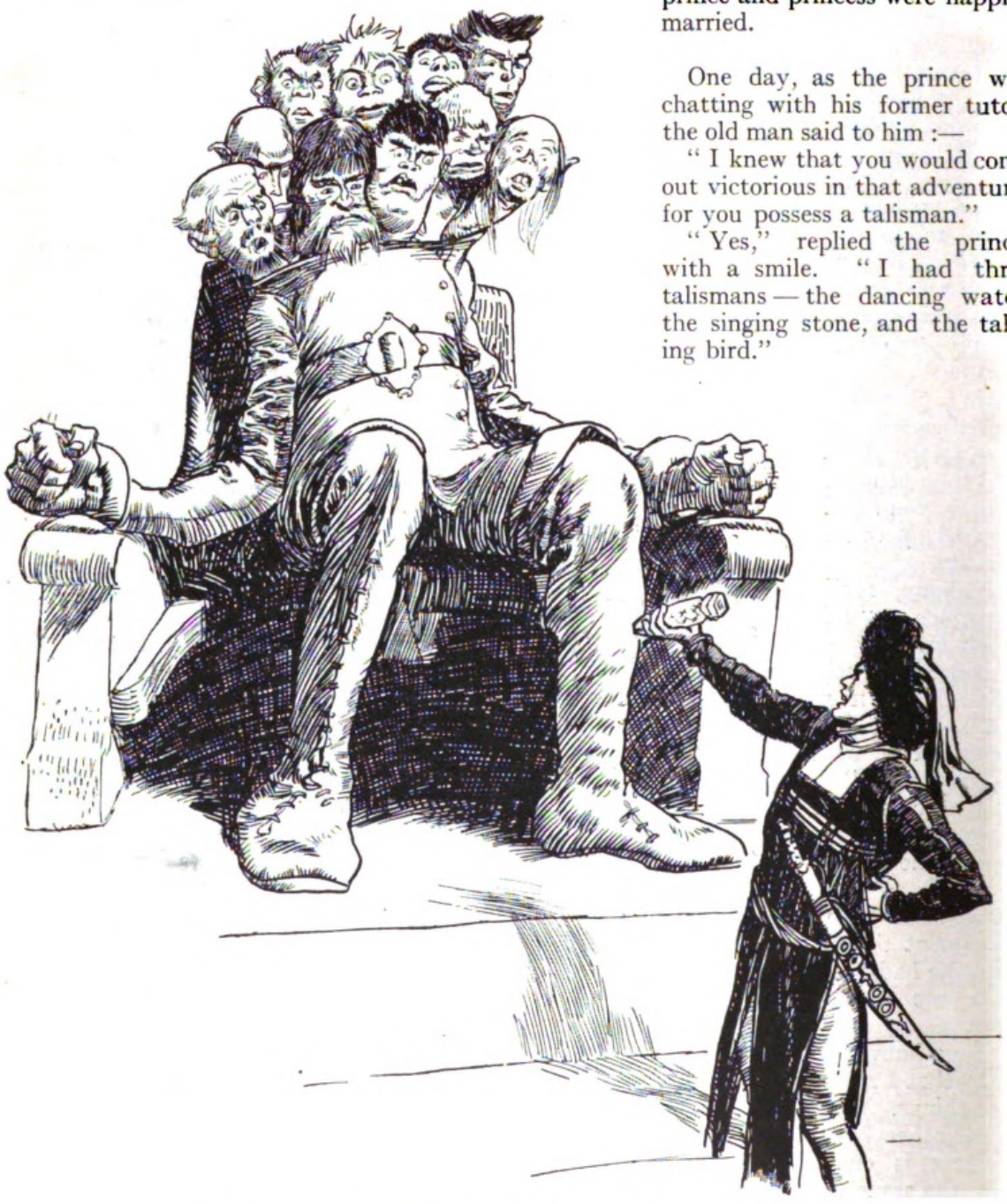
The young prince bent the bow with no trouble whatever, and shot an arrow into each of the giant's heads. Magock uttered ten ear-splitting yells, which were heard so far off as the island of Malabar, then he staggered to a window and flung himself into the sea.

Having thus disposed of the giant, the prince hastened to the dungeon in which the charming Sita was confined. Taking her hand, he clasped upon her arm the magnificent bracelet of pearls. He restored her at once to her parents, and a few days later the prince and princess were happily married.

One day, as the prince was chatting with his former tutor, the old man said to him :—

"I knew that you would come out victorious in that adventure, for you possess a talisman."

"Yes," replied the prince, with a smile. "I had three talismans — the dancing water, the singing stone, and the talking bird."



"MAGOCK TURNED PALE, FOR AT THE FIRST GLANCE HE HAD RECOGNIZED THE DANCING WATER."

"I do not mean those," said the wise old man, gently, "but something—or, rather, three things—far better. I am thinking of the youth which dances in your body, the courage which speaks in your heart, and the charity which sings in your soul."

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# "As Funny as They Can."

## IV.—"When the Animals Got the Upper Hand." A Nightmare.

### By HARRY ROUNTREE.

This series is founded upon an entirely new idea—a different well-known humorous artist assuming the post of editor every month and doing his best to make his particular instalment "as funny as he can."

Mr. Rountree has taken into collaboration as a writer Mr. Walter Emanuel, of "Punch."

It will be interesting to hear from our readers at the end of a few months which editor they consider has been most successful in making them laugh.



*Photo. Russell & Sons.*

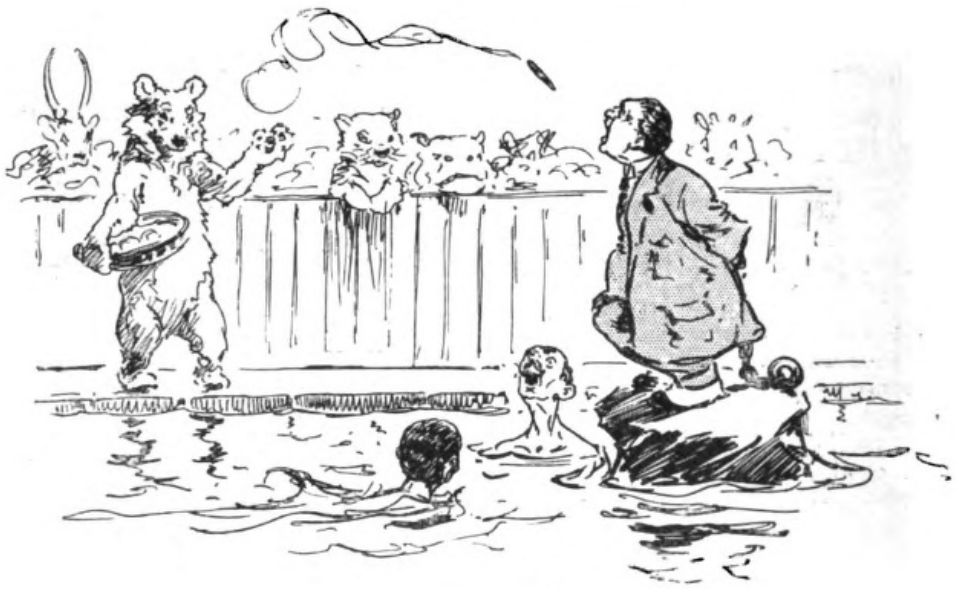
THE ARTIST IN THE CAGE AND THE AUTHOR ON THE POST.

IT was terrible—incredible.

It now seems impossible that for upwards of four months the human race should have been subjugated by the animals who had hitherto been our slaves.

Was it a nightmare? It seems so now. It was one more example of the power

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"FEEDING TIME AT THE ZOO."

of secret combination. At a given signal, without a warning to us, every animal in the kingdom attacked his man. In London solid phalanxes of dogs and horses were formed at pre-arranged rendezvous and marched snarling through the streets, biting all whom they met. Later on, the differences which had existed since the beginning of all things between cats and dogs were patched up, and a cat-bite proved more terrifying than a dog-bite. More serious still, by an ingenious plot a number of the more ferocious of the inmates of the Zoological Gardens succeeded in gaining their freedom. At first the solidarity between all the species of animals—creatures which, as a rule, were at one another's throats—was nothing short of marvellous. The smallest insects combined with the hugest of mammals against the common enemy. As showing the cleverness of their organization, take the case of the wasps. At the outbreak of the war—it was in the month of September—picked wasps stung all our leading statesmen and soldiers on the nose, with the result that they had to keep to their houses for many days. Creatures hitherto thought timid showed the most amazing pluck. At Ilfracombe, for instance, a number of butterflies banded themselves together, and, by breaking themselves against the eyes of an aged entomologist, blinded him At the Round



"RIDES FOR ANIMALS.

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Pond, Kensington Gardens, a stickleback sprang at a young angler and bit him severely in the calf. A London sparrow, again, coming across a scavenger who

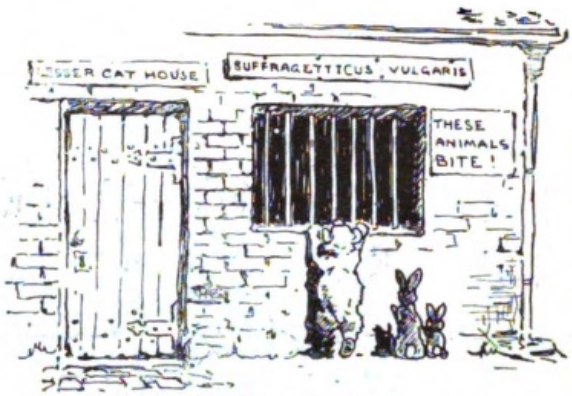


"CLIMBING THE POLE IN THE BEARS' PIT—NEW VERSION."

was yawning, flew down his throat and suffocated him.

For almost five months, as I have said, the animals, by their absolutely unexpected attack, held us in their grip, and an account of the tyranny which they exercised over us will make gruesome reading when the history of this reign of terror comes to be written. For the present a few examples must suffice.

A number of the more amusing-looking specimens of the human race — as also some of the most ferocious — were thrust




"ONE OF THE MOST INTERESTING EXHIBITS AT THE ZOO."

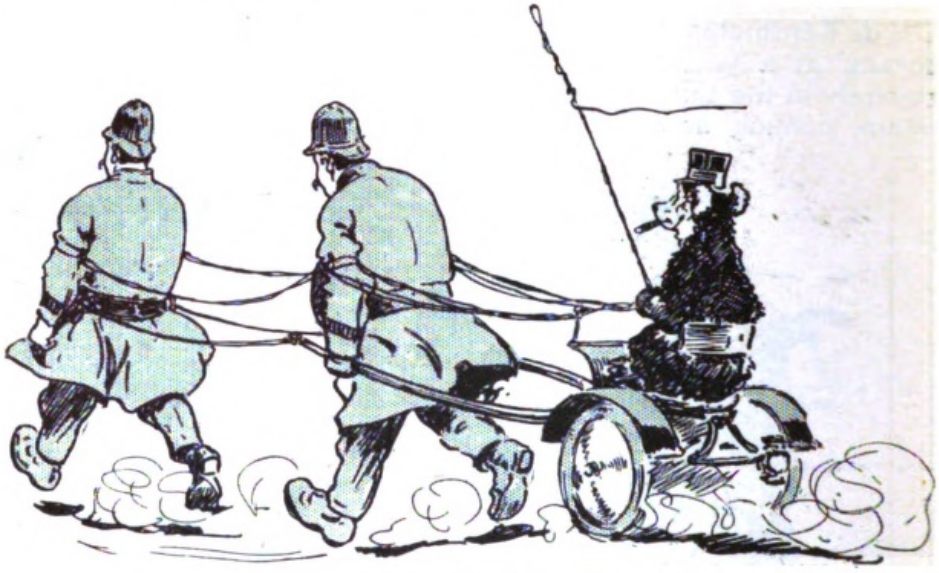
into the empty cages at the Zoo, and crowds of animals used to come to jeer at them, and especially to see them fed. Some exceptionally fat men were even made to walk on all-fours and give rides to animals in the grounds. Not all the inmates of the Zoo were confined behind bars. Some hundreds of them, young and old, were allowed a certain amount of freedom in a huge enclosure surrounded by a deep trench, and immense amusement was caused to the animal audiences by seeing these humans at their natural antics, such as football, golf, leap-frog, and the like.



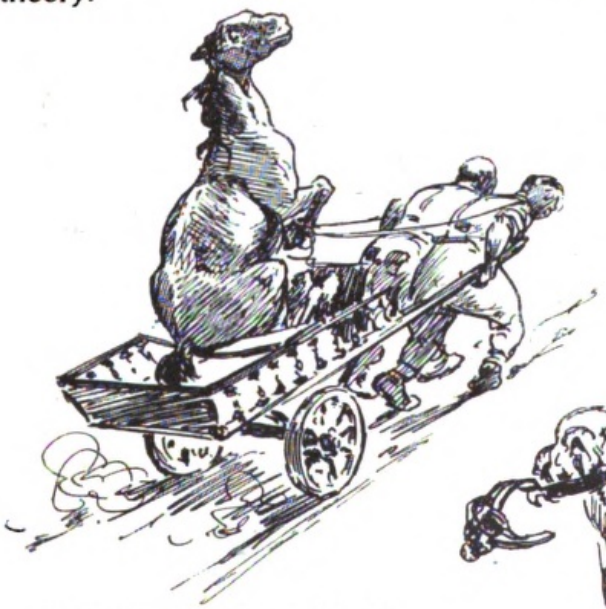
"SOME OF THE PRETTIEST OF OUR 'NUTS' WERE MADE TO FILL THE RÔLE OF TOY DOGS."

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The more learned and thoughtful among the animals formed Societies, and intense interest was aroused by an erudite gorilla propounding the theory that he was descended from Man, and many actual specimens of the human race were produced by him to lend colour to his theory.



"A SMART TURN-OUT IN THE PARK."



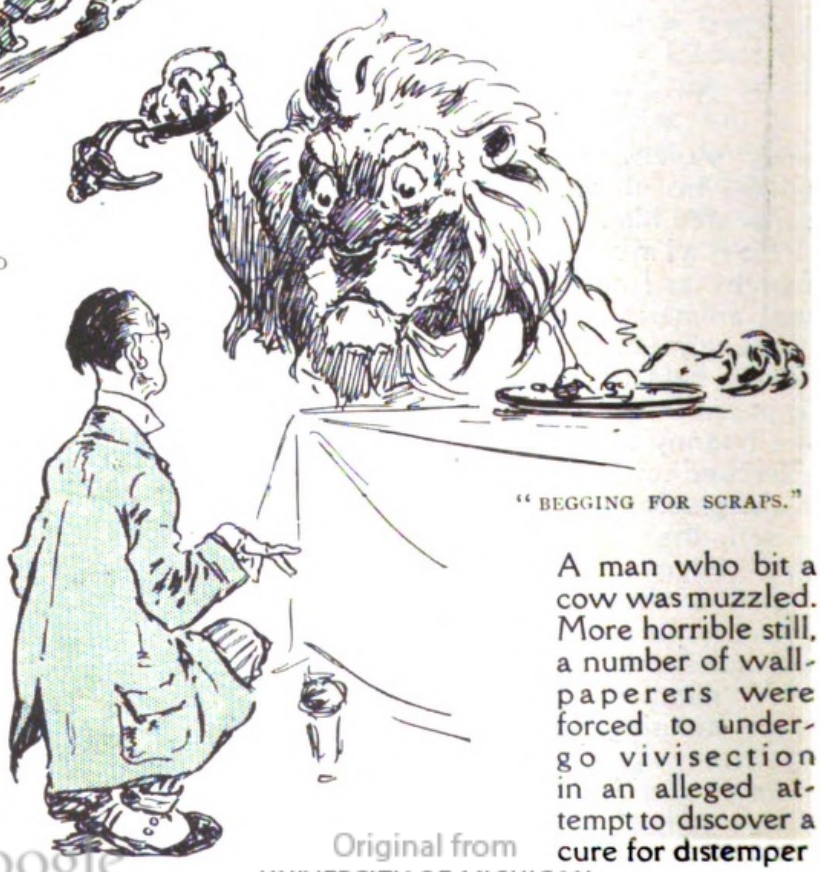
"STRONG MEN WERE FORCED TO PULL CARTS."

There seemed to be no end to the humiliation of what had once been the predominant race.

Some of the prettiest of our Nuts were kept by prosperous animals and made to fill the rôle of toy dogs. Strong men were forced to pull carts and carriages. In the Park, indeed, one might see a fashionable equipage drawn by a smart pair of blacks. In Devon and Somerset huge stags, with cruel horns, accompanied by fierce dogs, would hunt a helpless human for miles, sometimes even driving him into the sea, where he would perish by drowning. Again, men were taken out grouse-shooting, and forced to retrieve the birds in their mouths.

Innumerable brutalities were reported.

School children were beaten because they could not multiply so quickly as rabbits.



"BEGGING FOR SCRAPS."

A man who bit a cow was muzzled. More horrible still, a number of wall-paperers were forced to undergo vivisection in an alleged attempt to discover a cure for distemper

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"FLIES FROM SCOTLAND SOON BECAME VERY HUMAN."

"HUMAN HABITS CAME NATURALLY TO SOME."

"AN AWKWARD FIGURE WAS NO BAR TO THE WEARING OF CLOTHES."

"AND OF COURSE THERE WERE 'NUTS' IN THE ANIMAL KINGDOM."

"IMITATION——"

Pitiful scenes were to be witnessed in the homes of powerful dogs. While a great mastiff lolled at ease over his breakfast his human servants would beg on their hind-legs for scraps from the table: and, if he should graciously throw them a bone, they would pounce on it with angry growls and even start fighting over it.

But enough of these horrors. Suffice it for the present to say that the tables were ultimately turned, and that it was mainly owing to the defection of our good friends the dogs that this became possible. One day, perhaps, I will write the history of this astonishing upheaval in full. At present, exigencies of space prevent it.

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# CURIOSITIES.

*[We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.]*

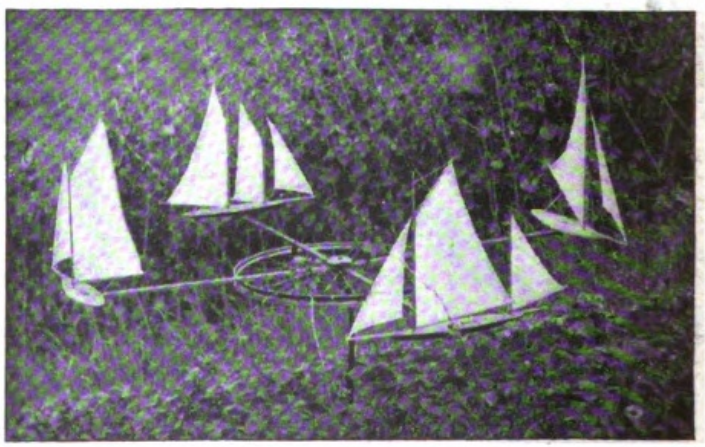


## A TWENTIETH-CENTURY CHINESE MARRIAGE.

NO longer need the poor little Chinese girl look forward with dread to her wedding-day. To-day she can marry the man she loves and not walk blind-folded into matrimony with the man who has been chosen as her husband from earliest childhood. Until the Revolution in China in 1913, it was the general custom in the East for the parents to allot their daughters husbands from babyhood, and with the consent of both families a huge party would be given and the children be considered engaged. But it was not permissible for either the future bride or groom to know of the arrangements made on their behalf. The families might even drift apart, leaving the young ones in total ignorance of the existence of each other. Between the ages of fifteen and eighteen the Chinese girl was told that she was to be married soon, and arrangements would be made for the wedding, but the young bride never became acquainted with her future husband till after the ceremony, when her thick, beautifully-embroidered, but impenetrable veil was removed. Then would she behold for the first time the husband to whom she was tied "for better or for worse," knowing that she must resign herself to her lot and endeavour to live her life through with a man whom perhaps she could never like. Many a young Chinese bride has been known to attempt suicide, often attaining her freedom through that one open gate—Death. But such a thing has not been heard of since China adopted the forms of modern civilization. The Chinese gentleman has learnt the art of courting and winning his bride, and the happy couple enter into their matrimonial compact with open eyes. The Chinese are gradually adopting our methods, and the marriage service is no longer a dreary and almost weird ordeal. In fact, in the matter of dress, as well as in customs, the Chinese are becoming very Europeanized, as this picture illustrates.—Miss Olga Lynborg, 96, Range Road, Shanghai, China.

## A NEW FORM OF SCARECROW.

THE accompanying photograph shows a novel and useful way of utilizing discarded bicycle wheels. Having damaged the front fork and one bearing in an accident, the broken fork was bent to form a right angle, as shown in the picture, while the rest of the apparatus was made of odd pieces of wood and calico. The whole revolves with the slightest breeze, and is here seen placed over a strawberry-bed, where it proved itself a most reliable scarer to all birds, etc. It has, too, the additional advantage of being by no means so unsightly as the usual scarecrow.—Mr. E. T. Smith, Rida Mill, Callington, Cornwall.



## Solution to Last Month's Problems.

MISSING WORD PUZZLE.—The answer is Idolatry—Dilatory—Adroitly.

### A ROYAL CHESS CONTEST.

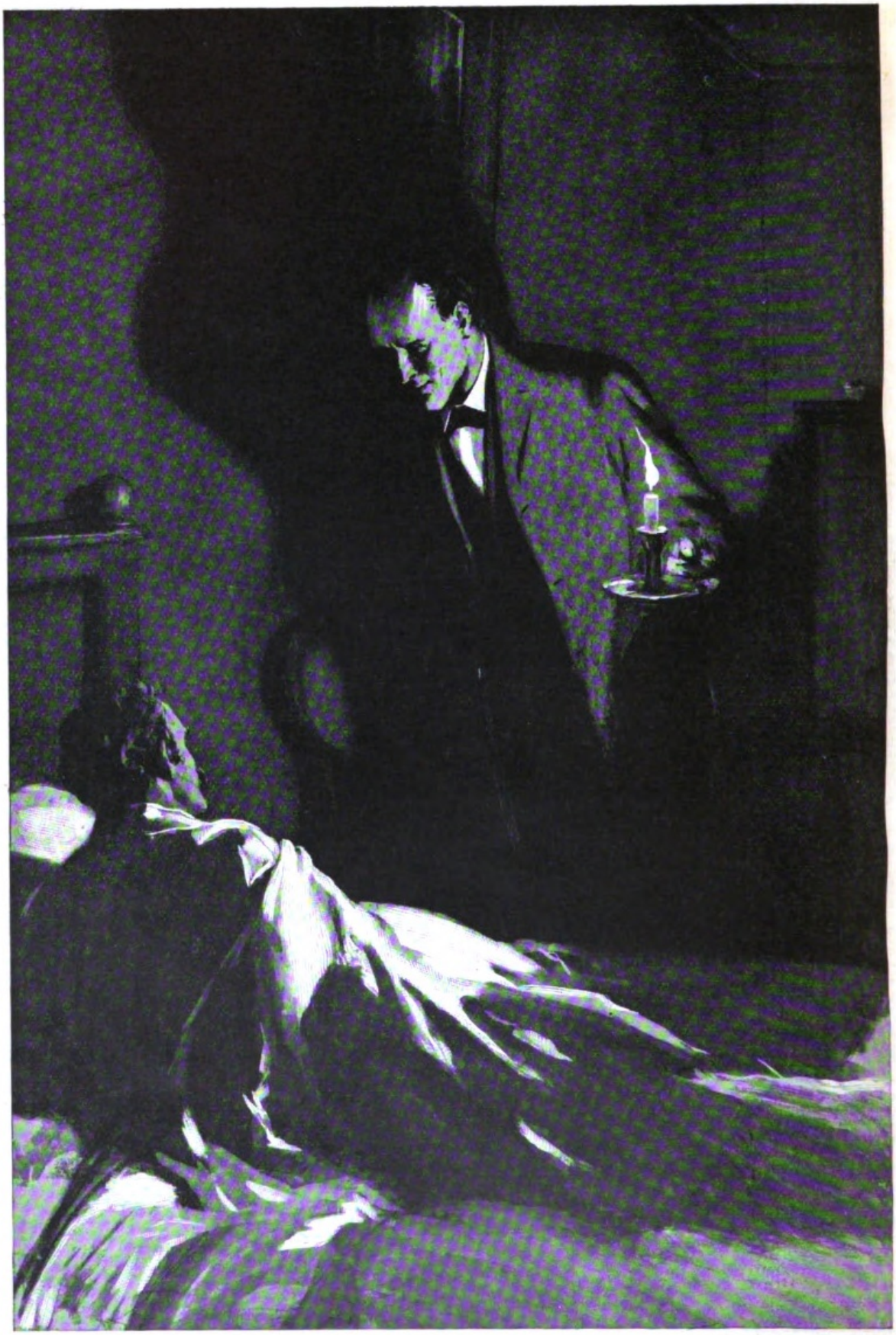
THE following are the solutions :—

1.—1. Q to Kt 3, P moves ; 2. Q to R 2, etc.
2.—1. Q to Kt 6, P moves ; 2. K to B 2, etc.
3.—1. P to Q 5, P moves ; 2. Q to Kt 7, etc.
4.—1. Q to Kt 7, P moves ; 2. P to B 5, etc.

All others obvious.

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"'WELL, HOLMES,' I MURMURED, 'HAVE YOU FOUND OUT ANYTHING?'"

(*See page* 611.)

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THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

DECEMBER, 1914.
Vol. xlviii. No. 288.

# The VALLEY of FEAR

# A NEW SHERLOCK HOLMES STORY

By

# A. CONAN DOYLE

*Illustrated by FRANK WILES*

## PART I.

## THE TRAGEDY OF BIRLSTONE

The opening chapters of this new and thrilling adventure of Sherlock Holmes described the receipt by Holmes of a cipher message, from which he deduces that some devilry is intended against a man named Douglas, a rich country gentleman living at the Manor House, Birlstone, in Sussex, and that the danger is a pressing one. Almost as soon as he has deciphered the message he is visited by Inspector MacDonald, of Scotland Yard, who brings the news that Mr. Douglas has been murdered that morning.

Holmes, Dr. Watson, and the inspector proceed to the scene of the tragedy, where they are met by Mr. White Mason, the chief Sussex detective. The murdered man had been horribly injured, while lying across his chest was a curious weapon—a shot-gun with the barrel sawn off a foot in front of the triggers. Near him was found a card with the initials "V. V." and the number "341" scrawled on it in ink, and about half-way up the forearm was a curious design—a branded triangle inside a circle. His wedding-ring had been removed and the ring above it replaced.

There is no clue to the murderer except a bloody footprint on the window-sill, and he had apparently made his escape by wading across the moat. Holmes is much struck by the fact that one of Douglas's dumb-bells is missing.

Cecil Barker, Douglas's most intimate friend, is considerably flustered while being cross-examined by the detectives, and confesses that Douglas had been jealous on account of his attentions to Mrs. Douglas. Holmes ascertains from Ames, the butler, that on the previous evening Barker was wearing a pair of bedroom slippers which were stained with blood. The last instalment ends with the following dialogue, which

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takes place in the study, Holmes having brought with him the blood-stained slippers from the hall:—

"Strange!" murmured Holmes, as he stood in the light of the window and examined them minutely. "Very strange indeed!"

Stooping with one of his quick, feline pounces he placed the slipper upon the blood-mark on the sill. It exactly corresponded. He smiled in silence at his colleagues.

The inspector was transfigured with excitement.

"Man!" he cried, "there's not a doubt of it! Barker has just marked the window himself. It's a good deal broader than any boot-mark. I mind that you said it was a splay foot, and here's the explanation. But what's the game, Mr. Holmes—what's the game?"

"Aye, what's the game?" my friend repeated, thoughtfully.

White Mason chuckled and rubbed his fat hands together in his professional satisfaction.

"I said it was a snorter!" he cried. "And a real snorter it is!"

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## CHAPTER VI.

### A DAWNING LIGHT.

THE three detectives had many matters of detail into which to inquire, so I returned alone to our modest quarters at the village inn; but before doing so I took a stroll in the curious old-world garden which flanked the house. Rows of very ancient yew trees, cut into strange designs, girded it round. Inside was a beautiful stretch of lawn with an old sundial in the middle, the whole effect so soothing and restful that it was welcome to my somewhat jangled nerves. In that deeply peaceful atmosphere one could forget or remember only as some fantastic nightmare that darkened study with the sprawling, blood-stained figure upon the floor. And yet as I strolled round it and tried to steep my soul in its gentle balm, a strange incident occurred which brought me back to the tragedy and left a sinister impression in my mind.

I have said that a decoration of yew trees circled the garden. At the end which was farthest from the house they thickened into a continuous hedge. On the other side of this hedge, concealed from the eyes of anyone approaching from the direction of the house, there was a stone seat. As I approached the spot I was aware of voices, some remark in the deep tones of a man, answered by a little ripple of feminine laughter. An instant later I had come round the end of the hedge, and my eyes lit upon Mrs. Douglas and the man Barker before they were aware of my presence. Her appearance gave me a shock. In the dining-room she had been demure and discreet. Now all pretence of grief had passed away from her. Her eyes shone with the joy of living, and her face still quivered with amusement at some remark of her companion. He sat forward, his hands clasped and his forearms on his knees, with an answering smile upon his bold, handsome face. In an instant—but it was just one instant too late—they resumed their solemn masks as my figure came into view. A hurried word or two passed between them, and then Barker rose and came towards me.

"Excuse me, sir," said he, "but am I addressing Dr. Watson?"

I bowed with a coldness which showed, I daresay, very plainly the impression which had been produced upon my mind.

"We thought that it was probably you, as your friendship with Mr. Sherlock Holmes is so well known. Would you mind coming over and speaking to Mrs. Douglas for one instant?"

I followed him with a dour face. Very clearly I could see in my mind's eye that shattered figure upon the floor. Here within a few hours of the tragedy were his wife and his nearest friend laughing together behind a bush in the garden which had been his. I greeted the lady with reserve. I had grieved with her grief in the dining-room. Now I met her appealing gaze with an unresponsive eye.

"I fear that you think me callous and hard-hearted?" said she.

I shrugged my shoulders.

"It is no business of mine," said I.

"Perhaps some day you will do me justice. If you only realized——"

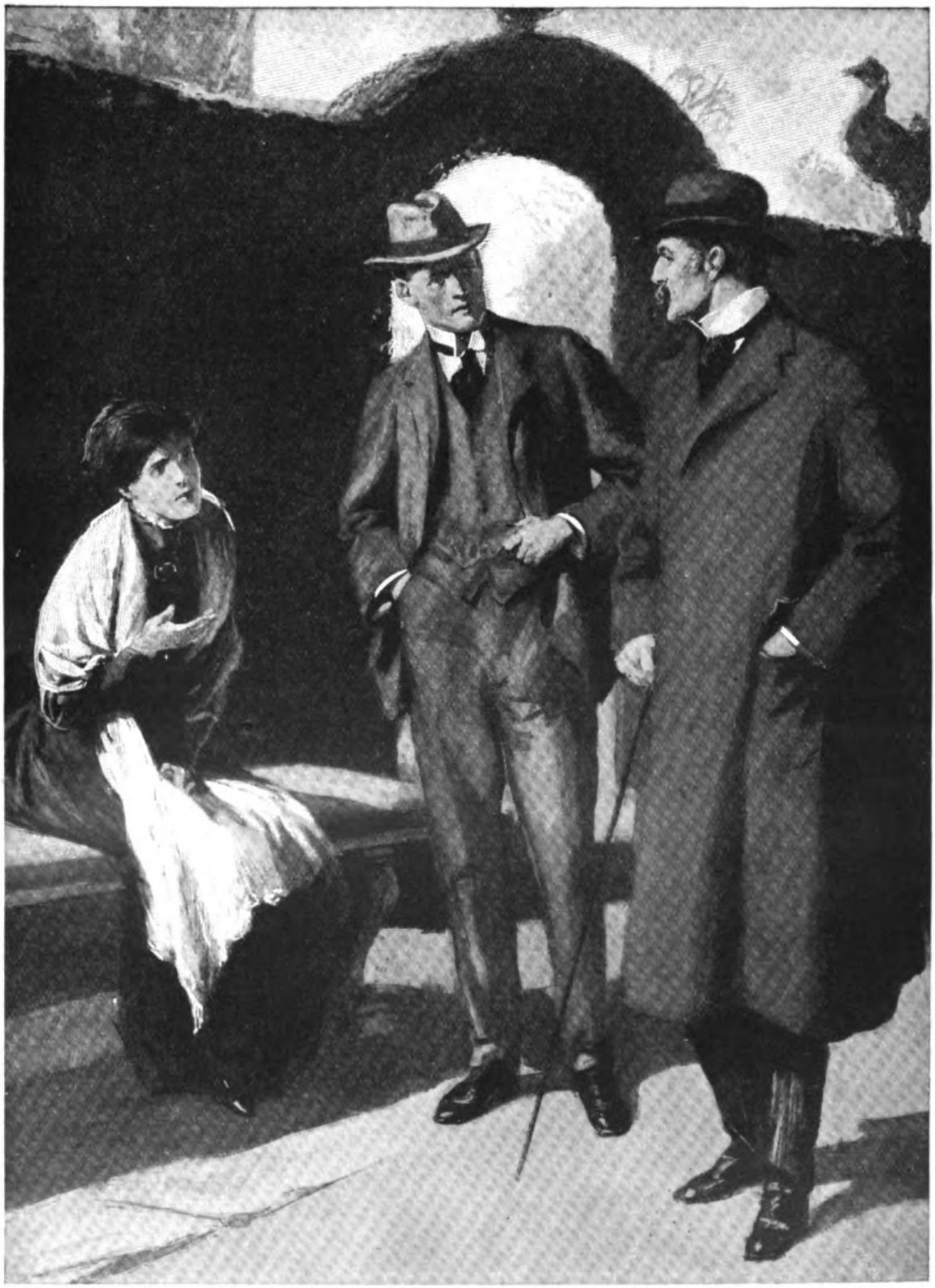
"There is no need why Dr. Watson should realize," said Barker, quickly. "As he has himself said, it is no possible business of his."

"Exactly," said I, "and so I will beg leave to resume my walk."

"One moment, Dr. Watson," cried the woman, in a pleading voice. "There is one question which you can answer with more authority than anyone else in the world, and it may make a very great difference to me. You know Mr. Holmes and his relations with the police better than anyone else can do. Supposing that a matter were brought confidentially to his knowledge, is it absolutely necessary that he should pass it on to the detectives?"

"Yes, that's it," said Barker, eagerly. "Is he on his own or is he entirely in with them?"

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"'MR. HOLMES IS AN INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATOR,' I SAID. 'HE IS HIS OWN MASTER.'"

"I really don't know that I should be justified in discussing such a point."

"I beg—I implore that you will, Dr. Watson. I assure you that you will be helping us—helping me greatly if you will guide us on that point."

There was such a ring of sincerity in the woman's voice that for the instant I forgot all about her levity and was moved only to do her will.

"Mr. Holmes is an independent investigator," I said. "He is his own master,

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and would act as his own judgment directed. At the same time he would naturally feel loyalty towards the officials who were working on the same case, and he would not conceal from them anything which would help them in bringing a criminal to justice. Beyond this I can say nothing, and I would refer you to Mr. Holmes himself if you wanted fuller information."

So saying I raised my hat and went upon my way, leaving them still seated behind that concealing hedge. I looked back as I rounded the far end of it, and saw that they were still talking very earnestly together, and, as they were gazing after me, it was clear that it was our interview that was the subject of their debate.

"I wish none of their confidences," said Holmes, when I reported to him what had occurred. He had spent the whole afternoon at the Manor House in consultation with his two colleagues, and returned about five with a ravenous appetite for a high tea which I had ordered for him. "No confidences, Watson, for they are mighty awkward if it comes to an arrest for conspiracy and murder."

"You think it will come to that?"

He was in his most cheerful and *débonnaire* humour.

"My dear Watson, when I have exterminated that fourth egg I will be ready to put you in touch with the whole situation. I don't say that we have fathomed it—far from it—but when we have traced the missing dumb-bell——"

"The dumb-bell!"

"Dear me, Watson, is it possible that you have not penetrated the fact that the case hangs upon the missing dumb-bell? Well, well, you need not be downcast, for, between ourselves, I don't think that either Inspector Mac or the excellent local practitioner has grasped the overwhelming importance of this incident. One dumb-bell, Watson! Consider an athlete with one dumb-bell. Picture to yourself the unilateral development—the imminent danger of a spinal curvature. Shocking, Watson; shocking!"

He sat with his mouth full of toast and his eyes sparkling with mischief, watching my intellectual entanglement. The mere sight of his excellent appetite was an assurance of success, for I had very clear recollections of days and nights without a thought of food, when his baffled mind had chafed before some problem whilst his thin, eager features became more attenuated with the asceticism of complete mental concentration. Finally he lit his pipe and, sitting in the ingle-nook of the old village inn, he talked slowly and at random about his case, rather as one who thinks aloud than as one who makes a considered statement.

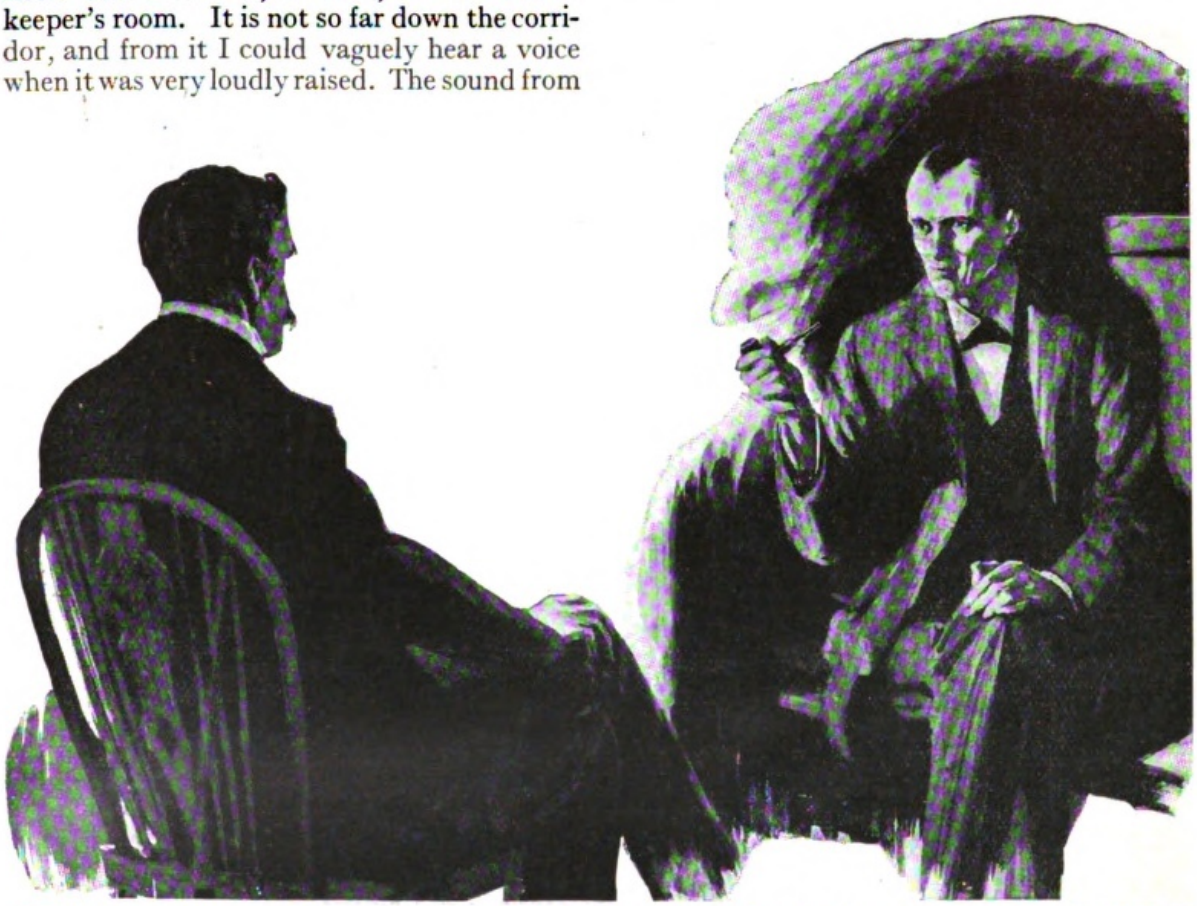
"A lie, Watson—a great big, thumping, obtrusive, uncompromising lie—that's what meets us on the threshold. There is our starting point. The whole story told by Barker is a lie. But Barker's story is corroborated by Mrs. Douglas. Therefore she is lying also. They are both lying and in a conspiracy. So now we have the clear problem—why are they lying, and what is the truth which they are trying so hard to conceal? Let us try, Watson, you and I, if we can get behind the lie and reconstruct the truth.

"How do I know that they are lying? Because it is a clumsy fabrication which simply *could* not be true. Consider! According to the story given to us the assassin had less than a minute after the murder had been committed to take that ring, which was under another ring, from the dead man's finger, to replace the other ring—a thing which he would surely never have done—and to put that singular card beside his victim. I say that this was obviously impossible. You may argue—but I have too much respect for your judgment, Watson, to think that you will do so—that the ring may have been taken before the man was killed. The fact that the candle had only been lit a short time shows that there had been no lengthy interview. Was Douglas, from what we hear of his fearless character, a man who would be likely to give up his wedding-ring at such short notice, or could we conceive of his giving it up at all? No, no, Watson, the assassin was alone with the dead man for some time with the lamp lit. Of that I have no doubt at all. But the gunshot was apparently the cause of death. Therefore the gunshot must have been fired some time earlier than we are told. But there could be no mistake about such a matter as that. We are in the presence, therefore, of a deliberate conspiracy upon the part of the two people who heard the gunshot—of the man Barker and of the woman Douglas. When on the top of this I am able to show that the blood-mark upon the window-sill was deliberately placed there by Barker in order to give a false clue to the police, you will admit that the case grows dark against him.

"Now we have to ask ourselves at what hour the murder actually did occur. Up to half-past ten the servants were moving about the house, so it was certainly not before that

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time. At a quarter to eleven they had all gone to their rooms with the exception of Ames, who was in the pantry. I have been trying some experiments after you left us this afternoon, and I find that no noise which MacDonald can make in the study can penetrate to me in the pantry when the doors are all shut. It is otherwise, however, from the housekeeper's room. It is not so far down the corridor, and from it I could vaguely hear a voice when it was very loudly raised. The sound from past eleven, when they rang the bell and summoned the servants. What were they doing, and why did they not instantly give the alarm? That is the question which faces us, and when it has been answered we will surely have gone some way to solve our problem."



"YOU THINK, THEN, DEFINITELY, THAT BARKER AND MRS. DOUGLAS ARE GUILTY OF THE MURDER?"

a shot-gun is to some extent muffled when the discharge is at very close range, as it undoubtedly was in this instance. It would not be very loud, and yet in the silence of the night it should have easily penetrated to Mrs. Allen's room. She is, as she has told us, somewhat deaf, but none the less she mentioned in her evidence that she did hear something like a door slamming half an hour before the alarm was given. Half an hour before the alarm was given would be a quarter to eleven. I have no doubt that what she heard was the report of the gun, and that this was the real instant of the murder. If this is so, we have now to determine what Mr. Barker and Mrs. Douglas, presuming that they are not the actual murderers, could have been doing from a quarter to eleven, when the sound of the gun-shot brought them down, until a quarter

"I am convinced myself," said I, "that there is an understanding between those two people. She must be a heartless creature to sit laughing at some jest within a few hours of her husband's murder."

"Exactly. She does not shine as a wife even in her own account of what occurred. I am not a whole-souled admirer of womankind, as you are aware, Watson, but my experience of life has taught me that there are few wives having any regard for their husbands who would let any man's spoken word stand between them and that husband's dead body. Should I ever marry, Watson, I should hope to inspire my wife with some feeling which would prevent her from being walked off by a housekeeper when my corpse was lying within a few yards of her. It was badly stage-managed, for even the rawest of investigators must be struck by the absence

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of the usual feminine ululation. If there had been nothing else, this incident alone would have suggested a prearranged conspiracy to my mind."

"You think, then, definitely, that Barker and Mrs. Douglas are guilty of the murder?"

"There is an appalling directness about your questions, Watson," said Holmes, shaking his pipe at me. "They come at me like bullets. If you put it that Mrs. Douglas and Barker know the truth about the murder and are conspiring to conceal it, then I can give you a whole-souled answer. I am sure they do. But your more deadly proposition is not so clear. Let us for a moment consider the difficulties which stand in the way.

"We will suppose that this couple are united by the bonds of a guilty love and that they have determined to get rid of the man who stands between them. It is a large supposition, for discreet inquiry among servants and others has failed to corroborate it in any way. On the contrary, there is a good deal of evidence that the Douglases were very attached to each other."

"That I am sure cannot be true," said I, thinking of the beautiful, smiling face in the garden.

"Well, at least they gave that impression. However, we will suppose that they are an extraordinarily astute couple, who deceive everyone upon this point and who conspire to murder the husband. He happens to be a man over whose head some danger hangs——"

"We have only their word for that."

Holmes looked thoughtful.

"I see, Watson. You are sketching out a theory by which everything they say from the beginning is false. According to your idea, there was never any hidden menace or secret society or Valley of Fear or Boss MacSomebody or anything else. Well, that is a good, sweeping generalization. Let us see what that brings us to. They invent this theory to account for the crime. They then play up to the idea by leaving this bicycle in the park as a proof of the existence of some outsider. The stain on the window-sill conveys the same idea. So does the card upon the body, which might have been prepared in the house. That all fits into your hypothesis, Watson. But now we come on the nasty angular, uncompromising bits which won't slip into their places. Why a cut-off shot-gun of all weapons—and an American one at that? How could they be so sure that the sound of it would not bring someone on to them? It's a mere chance, as it is, that Mrs. Allen did not start out to inquire for the slamming door. Why did your guilty couple do all this, Watson?"

"I confess that I can't explain it."

"Then, again, if a woman and her lover conspire to murder a husband, are they going to advertise their guilt by ostentatiously removing his wedding-ring after his death? Does that strike you as very probable, Watson?"

"No, it does not."

"And once again, if the thought of leaving a bicycle concealed outside had occurred to you, would it really have seemed worth doing when the dullest detective would naturally say this is an obvious blind, as the bicycle is the first thing which the fugitive needed in order to make his escape?"

"I can conceive of no explanation."

"And yet there should be no combination of events for which the wit of man cannot conceive an explanation. Simply as a mental exercise, without any assertion that it is true, let me indicate a possible line of thought. It is, I admit, mere imagination, but how often is imagination the mother of truth?

"We will suppose that there *was* a guilty secret, a really shameful secret, in the life of this man Douglas. This leads to his murder by someone who is, we will suppose, an avenger—someone from outside. This avenger, for some reason which I confess I am still at a loss to explain, took the dead man's wedding-ring. The vendetta might conceivably date back to the man's first marriage and the ring be taken for some such reason. Before this avenger got away Barker and the wife had reached the room. The assassin convinced them that any attempt to arrest him would lead to the publication of some hideous scandal. They were converted to this idea and preferred to let him go. For this purpose they probably lowered the bridge, which can be done quite noiselessly, and then raised it again. He made his escape, and for some reason thought that he could do so more safely on foot than on the bicycle. He therefore left his machine where it would not be discovered until he had got safely away. So far we are within the bounds of possibility, are we not?"

"Well, it is possible, no doubt," said I, with some reserve.

"We have to remember, Watson, that whatever occurred is certainly something very extraordinary. Well now, to continue our supposititious case, the couple—not necessarily a guilty couple—realize after the murderer is gone that they have placed themselves in a position in which it may be difficult

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for them to prove that they did not themselves either do the deed or connive at it. They rapidly and rather clumsily met the situation. The mark was put by Barker's blood-stained slipper upon the window-sill to suggest how the fugitive got away. They obviously were the two who must have heard the sound of the gun, so they gave the alarm exactly as they would have done, but a good half-hour after the event."

"And how do you propose to prove all this?"

"Well, if there were an outsider he may be traced and taken. That would be the most effective of all proofs. But if not—well, the resources of science are far from being exhausted. I think that an evening alone in that study would help me much."

"An evening alone!"

"I propose to go up there presently. I have arranged it with the estimable Ames, who is by no means whole-hearted about Barker. I shall sit in that room and see if its atmosphere brings me inspiration. I'm a believer in the *genius loci*. You smile, friend Watson. Well, we shall see. By the way, you have that big umbrella of yours, have you not?"

"It is here."

"Well, I'll borrow that, if I may."

"Certainly—but what a wretched weapon! If there is danger——"

"Nothing serious, my dear Watson, or I should certainly ask for your assistance. But I'll take the umbrella. At present I am only awaiting the return of our colleagues from Tunbridge Wells, where they are at present engaged in trying for a likely owner to the bicycle."

It was nightfall before Inspector MacDonald and White Mason came back from their expedition, and they arrived exultant, reporting a great advance in our investigation.

"Man, I'll admeet that I had my doubts if there was ever an outsider," said MacDonald, "but that's all past now. We've had the bicycle identified and we have a description of our man, so that's a long step on our journey."

"It sounds to me like the beginning of the end," said Holmes; "I'm sure I congratulate you both with all my heart."

"Well, I started from the fact that Mr. Douglas had seemed disturbed since the day before, when he had been at Tunbridge Wells. It was at Tunbridge Wells, then, that he had become conscious of some danger. It was clear, therefore, that if a man had come over with a bicycle it was from Tunbridge Wells that he might be expected to have come. We took the bicycle over with us and showed it at the hotels. It was identified at once by the manager of the Eagle Commercial as belonging to a man named Hargrave who had taken a room there two days before. This bicycle and a small valise were his whole belongings. He had registered his name as coming from London, but had given no address. The valise was London-made and the contents were British, but the man himself was undoubtedly an American."

"Well, well," said Holmes, gleefully, "you have indeed done some solid work whilst I have been sitting spinning theories with my friend. It's a lesson in being practical, Mr. Mac."

"Aye, it's just that, Mr. Holmes," said the inspector with satisfaction.

"But this may all fit in with your theories," I remarked.

"That may or may not be. But let us hear the end, Mr. Mac. Was there nothing to identify this man?"

"So little that it was evident he had carefully guarded himself against identification. There were no papers or letters and no marking upon the clothes. A cycle-map of the county lay upon his bedroom table. He had left the hotel after breakfast yesterday morning upon his bicycle, and no more was heard of him until our inquiries."

"That's what puzzles me, Mr. Holmes," said White Mason. "If the fellow did not want the hue and cry raised over him, one would imagine that he would have returned and remained at the hotel as an inoffensive tourist. As it is, he must know that he will be reported to the police by the hotel manager, and that his disappearance will be connected with the murder."

"So one would imagine. Still he has been justified of his wisdom up to date at any rate, since he has not been taken. But his description—what of that?"

MacDonald referred to his notebook.

"Here we have it so far as they could give it. They don't seem to have taken any very particular stock of him, but still the porter, the clerk, and the chambermaid are all agreed that this about covers the points. He was a man about five foot nine in height, fifty or so years of age, his hair slightly grizzled, a greyish moustache, a curved nose, and a face which all of them described as fierce and forbidding."

"Well, bar the expression, that might almost be a description of Douglas himself,"



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said Holmes. "He is just over fifty, with grizzled hair and moustache and about the same height. Did you get anything else?"

"He was dressed in a heavy grey suit with a reefer jacket, and he wore a short yellow overcoat and a soft cap."

"What about the shot-gun?"

"It is less than two feet long. It could very well have fitted into his valise. He could have carried it inside his overcoat without difficulty."

"And how do you consider that all this bears upon the general case?"

"Well, Mr. Holmes," said MacDonald, "when we have got our man—and you may be sure that I had his description on the wires within five minutes of hearing it—we shall be better able to judge. But even as it stands, we have surely gone a long way. We know that an American calling himself Hargrave came to Tunbridge Wells two days ago with bicycle and valise. In the latter was a sawn-off shot-gun, so he came with the deliberate purpose of crime. Yesterday morning he set off for this place upon his bicycle with his gun concealed in his overcoat. No one saw him arrive, so far as we can learn, but he need not pass through the village to reach the park gates, and there are many cyclists upon the road. Presumably he at once concealed his cycle among the laurels, where it was found, and possibly lurked there himself, with his eye on the house waiting for Mr. Douglas to come out. The shot-gun is a strange weapon to use inside a house, but he had intended to use it outside, and then it has very obvious advantages, as it would be impossible to miss with it, and the sound of shots is so common in an English sporting neighbourhood that no particular notice would be taken."

"That is all very clear!" said Holmes.

"Well, Mr. Douglas did not appear. What was he to do next? He left his bicycle and approached the house in the twilight. He found the bridge down and no one about. He took his chance, intending, no doubt, to make some excuse if he met anyone. He met no one. He slipped into the first room that he saw and concealed himself behind the curtain. From thence he could see the drawbridge go up and he knew that his only escape was through the moat. He waited until a quarter past eleven, when Mr. Douglas, upon his usual nightly round, came into the room. He shot him and escaped, as arranged. He was aware that the bicycle would be described by the hotel people and be a clue against him, so he left it there and made his way by some other means to London or to some safe hiding-place which he had already arranged. How is that, Mr. Holmes?"



"'IT SOUNDS TO ME LIKE THE BEGINNING OF THE END,' SAID HOLMES; 'I'M SURE I CONGRATULATE YOU BOTH WITH ALL MY HEART."

"Well, Mr. Mac, it is very good and very clear so far as it goes. That is your end of the story. My end is that the crime was com-

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mitted half an hour earlier than reported; that Mrs. Douglas and Mr. Barker are both in a conspiracy to conceal something; that they aided the murderer's escape—or at least, that they reached the room before he escaped—and that they fabricated evidence of his escape through the window, whereas in all probability they had themselves let him go by lowering the bridge. That's *my* reading of the first half."

The two detectives shook their heads.

"Well, Mr. Holmes, if this is true we only tumble out of one mystery into another," said the London inspector.

"And in some ways a worse one," added White Mason. "The lady has never been in America in her life. What possible connection could she have with an American assassin which would cause her to shelter him?"

"I freely admit the difficulties," said Holmes. "I propose to make a little investigation of my own to-night, and it is just possible that it may contribute something to the common cause."

"Can we help you, Mr. Holmes?"

"No, no! Darkness and Dr. Watson's umbrella. My wants are simple. And Ames—the faithful Ames—no doubt he will stretch a point for me. All my lines of thought lead me back invariably to the one basic question—why should an athletic man develop his frame upon so unnatural an instrument as a single dumb-bell?"

It was late that night when Holmes returned from his solitary excursion. We slept in a double-bedded room, which was the best that the little country inn could do for us. I was already asleep when I was partly awakened by his entrance.

"Well, Holmes," I murmured, "have you found out anything?"

He stood beside me in silence, his candle in his hand. Then the tall lean figure inclined towards me.

"I say, Watson," he whispered, "would you be afraid to sleep in the same room as a lunatic, a man with softening of the brain, an idiot whose mind has lost its grip?"

"Not in the least," I answered in astonishment.

"Ah, that's lucky," he said, and not another word would he utter that night.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE SOLUTION.

NEXT morning, after breakfast, we found Inspector MacDonald and Mr. White Mason seated in close consultation in the small parlour of the local police-sergeant. Upon the table in front of them were piled a number of letters and telegrams, which they

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were carefully sorting and docketing. Three had been placed upon one side.

"Still on the track of the elusive bicyclist?" Holmes asked, cheerfully. "What is the latest news of the ruffian?"

MacDonald pointed ruefully to his heap of correspondence.

"He is at present reported from Leicester, Nottingham, Southampton, Derby, East Ham, Richmond, and fourteen other places. In three of them—East Ham, Leicester, and Liverpool—there is a clear case against him and he has actually been arrested. The country seems to be full of fugitives with yellow coats."

"Dear me!" said Holmes, sympathetically. "Now, Mr. Mac, and you, Mr. White Mason, I wish to give you a very earnest piece of advice. When I went into this case with you I bargained, as you will no doubt remember, that I should not present you with half-proved theories, but that I should retain and work out my own ideas until I had satisfied myself that they were correct. For this reason I am not at the present moment telling you all that is in my mind. On the other hand, I said that I would play the game fairly by you, and I do not think it is a fair game to allow you for one unnecessary moment to waste your energies upon a profitless task. Therefore I am here to advise you this morning, and my advice to you is summed up in three words: Abandon the case."

MacDonald and White Mason stared in amazement at their celebrated colleague.

"You consider it hopeless?" cried the inspector.

"I consider *your* case to be hopeless. I do not consider that it is hopeless to arrive at the truth."

"But this cyclist. He is not an invention. We have his description, his valise, his bicycle. The fellow must be somewhere. Why should we not get him?"

"Yes, yes; no doubt he is somewhere, and no doubt we shall get him, but I would not have you waste your energies in East Ham or Liverpool. I am sure that we can find some shorter cut to a result."

"You are holding something back. It's hardly fair of you, Mr. Holmes." The inspector was annoyed.

"You know my methods of work, Mr. Mac. But I will hold it back for the shortest time possible. I only wish to verify my details in one way, which can very readily be done, and then I make my bow and return to London, leaving my results entirely at your service. I owe you too much to act otherwise, for in all my experience I cannot recall any more singular and interesting study."

"This is clean beyond me, Mr. Holmes. We saw you when we returned from Tunbridge Wells last night, and you were in general agreement with our results. What has happened since then to give you a completely new idea of the case?"

"Well, since you ask me, I spent, as I told you that I would, some hours last night at the Manor House."

"Well, what happened?"

"Ah! I can only give you a very general answer to that for the moment. By the way, I have been reading a short, but clear and interesting, account of the old building, purchasable at the modest sum of one penny from the local tobacconist." Here Holmes drew a small tract, embellished with a rude engraving of the ancient Manor House, from his waistcoat pocket. "It immensely adds to the zest of an investigation, my dear Mr. Mac, when one is in conscious sympathy with the historical atmosphere of one's surroundings. Don't look so impatient, for I assure you that even so bald an account as this raises some sort of picture of the past in one's mind. Permit me to give you a sample. 'Erected in the fifth year of the reign of James I., and standing upon the site of a much older building, the Manor House of Birlstone presents one of the finest surviving examples of the moated Jacobean residence——'"

"You are making fools of us, Mr. Holmes."

"Tut, tut, Mr. Mac!—the first sign of temper I have detected in you. Well, I won't read it verbatim, since you feel so strongly upon the subject. But when I tell you that there is some account of the taking of the place by a Parliamentary colonel in 1644, of the concealment of Charles for several days in the course of the Civil War, and finally of a visit there by the second George, you will admit that there are various associations of interest connected with this ancient house."

"I don't doubt it, Mr. Holmes, but that is no business of ours."

"Is it not? Is it not? Breadth of view, my dear Mr. Mac, is one of the essentials of our profession. The inter-play of ideas and the oblique uses of knowledge are often of extraordinary interest. You will excuse these remarks from one who, though a mere connoisseur of crime, is still rather older and perhaps more experienced than yourself."

"I'm the first to admit that," said the detective, heartily. "You get to your point,

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I admit, but you have such a deuced round-the-corner way of doing it."

"Well, well, I'll drop past history and get down to present-day facts. I called last night, as I have already said, at the Manor House. I did not see either Mr. Barker or Mrs. Douglas. I saw no necessity to disturb them, but I was pleased to hear that the lady was not visibly pining and that she had partaken of an excellent dinner. My visit was specially made to the good Mr. Ames, with whom I exchanged some amiabilities which culminated in his allowing me, without reference to anyone else, to sit alone for a time in the study."

"What! With that!" I ejaculated.

"No, no; everything is now in order. You gave permission for that, Mr. Mac, as I am informed. The room was in its normal state, and in it I passed an instructive quarter of an hour."

"What were you doing?"

"Well, not to make a mystery of so simple a matter, I was looking for the missing dumb-bell. It has always bulked rather large in my estimate of the case. I ended by finding it."

"Where?"

"Ah! There we come to the edge of the unexplored. Let me go a little farther, a very little farther, and I will promise that you shall share everything that I know."

"Well, we're bound to take you on your own terms," said the inspector; "but when it comes to telling us to abandon the case—— Why, in the name of goodness, should we abandon the case?"

"For the simple reason, my dear Mr. Mac, that you have not got the first idea what it is that you are investigating."

"We are investigating the murder of Mr. John Douglas, of Birlstone Manor."

"Yes, yes; so you are. But don't trouble to trace the mysterious gentleman upon the bicycle. I assure you that it won't help you."

"Then what do you suggest that we do?"

"I will tell you exactly what to do, if you will do it."

"Well, I'm bound to say I've always found you had reason behind all your queer ways. I'll do what you advise."

"And you, Mr. White Mason?"

The country detective looked helplessly from one to the other. Mr. Holmes and his methods were new to him.

"Well, if it is good enough for the inspector it is good enough for me," he said, at last.

"Capital!" said Holmes. "Well, then, I should recommend a nice, cheery country walk for both of you. They tell me that the views from Birlstone Ridge over the Weald are very remarkable. No doubt lunch could be got at some suitable hostelry, though my ignorance of the country prevents me from recommending one. In the evening, tired but happy——"

"Man, this is getting past a joke!" cried MacDonald, rising angrily from his chair.

"Well, well, spend the day as you like," said Holmes, patting him cheerfully upon the shoulder. "Do what you like and go where you will, but meet me here before dusk without fail—without fail, Mr. Mac."

"That sounds more like sanity."

"All of it was excellent advice, but I don't insist, so long as you are here when I need you. But now, before we part, I want you to write a note to Mr. Barker."

"Well?"

"I'll dictate it, if you like. Ready?

"'DEAR SIR,—It has struck me that it is our duty to drain the moat, in the hope that we may find some——'"

"It's impossible," said the inspector; "I've made inquiry."

"Tut, tut, my dear sir! Do, please, do what I ask you."

"Well, go on."

"'——in the hope that we may find something which may bear upon our investigation. I have made arrangements, and the workmen will be at work early to-morrow morning diverting the stream——'"

"Impossible!"

"'——diverting the stream, so I thought it best to explain matters beforehand.'

Now sign that, and send it by hand about four o'clock. At that hour we shall meet again in this room. Until then we can each do what we like, for I can assure you that this inquiry has come to a definite pause."

*(To be continued.)*

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# Our Friends the Fighting Rajahs.

## SOME INTIMATE CHARACTER-STUDIES, ANECDOTES, AND PERSONAL IMPRESSIONS.

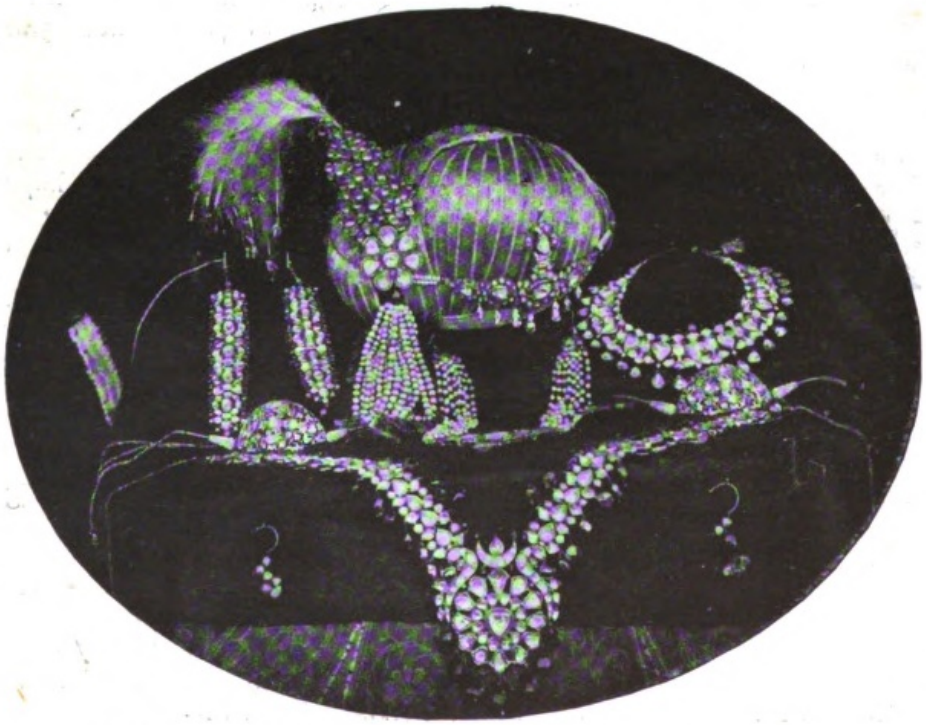
By SAINT NIHAL SINGH.

II.

## The Maharajah of Mysore.

THE exact antithesis of what the average Westerner takes a Maharajah to be is His Highness Sri Krishnaraja Wodiyar Bahadur, G.C.S.I., the ruler of Mysore, who has contributed nearly three hundred and fifty thousand pounds to the British war-chest, in addition to placing his efficient army at the disposal of His Britannic Majesty. His private life is simple to the point of stoicism, and not full of pomp, glory, circumstance, and extravagance. His personal conduct is austere. He is not an autocrat who punishes at his will, extorts money from his subjects, and lords it over everybody about him. On the contrary, he conducts the business of State through regular and most efficient constitutional channels.

All this is nothing short of miraculous. His Highness rules a State larger than Greece, which yields an annual revenue of a million and three-quarters sterling to the State coffers. The personal wealth of His Highness's dynasty is described as fabulous by those who know; he is the owner of numerous magnificent palaces, and his treasure of precious stones and ornaments is unexcelled in value and quality. An idea of the latter may be gained from the accompanying illustration showing his famous turban and some of his priceless jewels. He possesses the power of life and death over more than five million people. When you consider the temptations provided by almost limitless wealth and power, you will realize how wonderful it is that the Maharajah of Mysore should lead such a simple, pure, and correct life that not a breath of scandal has ever tarnished his fair name.



**THE MAHARAJAH OF MYSORE'S TURBAN AND JEWELS.**

THE VALUE OF THE MYSORE JEWELS RUN INTO MILLIONS OF POUNDS.

*Photo. by courtesy of Mr. N. C. Sen.*

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What better illustration can I give to those who live in Europe and America of the simple life led by this wealthy potentate than to describe how His Highness takes his meals? The Maharajah goes to the dining-room without shoes or socks, and wearing only a single simple, thin, and scanty silken robe. He sits on the bare floor, which has been sanctified for his express use at each meal-time by being plastered over with clay mixed according to the prescribed Hindu formula. The food is served, not on gold or silver platters encrusted with precious gems, as a Westerner would imagine, but on plain, ordinary, everyday, unadorned banana leaves cut into large pieces.

Flesh, fish, and fowl are rigidly and absolutely excluded from his regimen. Only pulses, cereals, vegetables, fruit, and nuts find a place on the Royal menu. The cooks employed at the palace know their work to perfection, but the combinations into which the materials that are admitted into the Mysore kitchen can be worked up are limited, and much cannot be achieved by way of variety. Besides, the chief qualification of the cooks is not their proficiency, but their caste. They are in His Highness's employ as *chefs* because they belong to the highest religious and social order of Hindus—the Brahmins—who in the heyday of Hindu splendour composed hymns and epics, wrote sacerdotal and philosophical works, and codified laws, though many of them now consider cooking and serving food at comparatively low wages the highest function that they can perform.



**THE MAHARAJAH OF MYSORE,**
WHO HAS PLACED HIS ARMY AND NEARLY THREE HUNDRED AND FIFTY THOUSAND POUNDS AT OUR DISPOSAL.
*Photo. by courtesy of His Highness.*

Even when His Highness is not residing in his palaces at his three capitals—Mysore City, Bangalore, and Seringapatam—or in his magnificent residence at Ootacamund, the famous mountain resort not far from his State, or going about his own principality, this simple but orthodox routine is observed. To do so in all circumstances is no laughing matter. Even when the Maharajah was travelling in the cool Himalayan regions, in continual sight of snows that never melt, he has been known to stop his special train, get out of it, take a bath in the running stream, sit on the river-bank with a thin silken sheet tied about him, and eat his simple vegetarian meal from a banana leaf, not minding the inclemency of the weather.

Too much cannot be said in praise of such devotion to one's notion of right living. This is especially so when orthodoxy does not degenerate into bigotry. Above all, the Maharajah of Mysore is tolerant, broad-minded, and just. He never thinks of anyone's religion when considering the qualifications of a candidate for employment in his own household or in the State service. Himself a strict Hindu, his private secretary is a Moslem gentleman—Mirza M. Ismail—who has established a name for his statesmanship and courtesy. Though His Highness never eats in the Western way, yet he presides over the banquets that he lavishly gives in honour of his Occidental guests—and he has entertained such distinguished personages as the Emperor of India and more than one Viceroy. As in matters relating to food, His

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Highness adheres to Indian clothes. He always wears his turban tied in the correct fashion of Mysorean kings. His sense of colour harmony is wonderful, and to see him at different times is to notice that his head-gear is of a different colour almost every time.

His courts, or durbars, are held in the old style. Everybody present sits cross-legged on the floor, His Highness occupying the cushion of State, which is on a raised platform. At times these courts last for five hours or more, and so polished in manner and so patient are the courtiers that they never shift their position. To do so conspicuously would, of course, be considered a mark of low breeding.

His Highness is reputed to have in his possession the very throne occupied by the great and powerful Hindu Emperor, Vikramaditya, whose era lay before the Christian era. This is a cherished relic, and is literally worshipped by the Mysore subjects.

From what has been said it must not be taken for granted that the Maharajah is a recluse. On the contrary, he is a keen and skilful sportsman. He engages in elephant-hunting in the vast prehistoric jungles which form a portion of his State, nearly thirty thousand square miles in area. He is devoted to racing, and breeds blood-horses on the two stud farms which he maintains. He has his own private racecourse, and the annual race meetings of Mysore are brilliant functions, attracting personages of note from all over India. Coaching and motoring also appeal to him, and he handles the reins and drives his motor-cars with exceptional skill. He is also good at racquets and tennis.

Probably the most marked characteristic of His Highness is his dignity and reserve, in public and even in private life. Young in years—he is only twenty-six—there is no crowned head, Eastern or Western, that is carried with a more kingly bearing. His serenity is imperturbable, and he is cool, calm, collected, and every inch a ruler in circumstances that would irritate an ordinary person.

The Maharajah's devotion to his mother deserves special mention. Her Highness the Dowager Maharanee is a well-read and enlightened queen, who, however, has not seen fit to cast aside the *purdah* and come out from her seclusion. Her progressiveness is demonstrated by the active lead she has taken in popularizing St. John's Ambulance work in Mysore State.

It is a touching fact that the Maharajah is so staunch an adherent of monogamy that he will not take unto himself another wife, though his present union has not been blessed with children. His Highness's conduct in this respect is very different from that of many other Rajahs, who take full advantage of similar excuses to contract polygamous marriages.

The Maharajah's heir is his younger brother, the Yuveraj. The two are most deeply attached to each other.

## The Maharajah of Gwalior.

For sheer versatility, for devotion to work, and for fearlessness in sport, the Maharajah of Gwalior, Major-General His Highness Madho Rao Sindhia, G.C.V.O., G.C.S.I., Hon. LL.D. Cambridge, Hon. and Extra A.D.C. to the King, Hon. Colonel 1st Duke of York's Own Lancers, Hon. Colonel British Army, is unexcelled among the Maharajahs. He can carry in his head the minutest details of the administration of his State, which is more than twenty-five thousand square miles in area—about twice the size of brave Belgium. He can do the work of the lowest clerk in his employ in the remotest part of his dominion, or perform the most complicated tasks of his highest-paid official. With equal facility he can discharge the duties of the trooper or infantryman of his army, or can head the brilliant column of his military forces. With perfect *sang-froid* he can jump into the driver's cab and pilot a heavily-laden railway train over the steepest gradients and around the most treacherous curves. For him to see a broken-down motor-car is to feel his fingers twitching to put it into action. And he is no mere mechanic, but is an inventor as well.

I have been told of times when this ruler—only thirty-eight years old at the present time—has sat through the best part of the night puzzling over the details of revenue and expenditure of his State, jumped in the morning on to the engine and taken a party of distinguished hunters over the mountain-side into the jungle, and spent the whole day stalking lions and tigers from an elephant's back.

On one such occasion he and three other friends were riding on the back of an elephant in a sort of balanced saddle. The Maharajah was placed on one side of the howdah along with another heavy-set hunter, while two light-weights were together on the other side. Without warning, just as a tiger had been struck with a bullet, but had rushed away into the

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jungle unkilled, the ill-balanced saddle suddenly lurched, throwing out the Maharajah. The elephant plunged ahead, leaving His Highness, who still clung to his rifle, sprawling on the ground. Without hesitating a moment, he ran into the thick forest after the disappearing beast, and was not again seen until late at night. Then, when his courtiers were beginning to grow frantic at his long-continued absence in such circumstances, he suddenly appeared, bringing along the skin of the tiger, which he had relentlessly pursued on foot, shot, and flayed with his own hands.

His fearlessness knows no bounds. While His Majesty King George was visiting India as Prince of Wales, Maharajah Sindhia followed up on foot tiger which His Royal Highness had wounded, but which had managed to get away and hide in the thick undergrowth, which was so dense that, though the Maharajah and his beaters were all the time within twenty-five yards of the beast, they did not see it. The idea was to drive the wounded tiger back so that the Prince of Wales could get a second shot. This plan, however, had to be abandoned, as the fierce beast suddenly charged the party on foot, which, besides the ruler of Gwalior, consisted of Maharajah Sir Pertab Singhji and a European army officer. Sir Pertab shot at it from a distance of fifty yards and succeeded in turning it, but unfortunately it swerved straight towards the Maharajah of Gwalior. His Highness quickly jumped behind a tree and sent another bullet into its body, shooting it dead when it was thirty yards away from him and making straight towards him.



**THE MAHARAJAH OF GWALIOR,**
WHOSE DEVOTION TO WORK AND FEARLESSNESS IN SPORT ARE UNEXCELLED AMONG THE MAHARAJAHS.
*Photo. Vandyk.*

It is to be noted that His Highness takes chances with his life, not merely in the interest of sport, but also to save others from danger. When he was in London in 1911, at the time of King George's Coronation, he saved the lives of many people by his superb horsemanship. The affair happened at a gymkhana at Hurlingham, where he was tent-pegging. His turban slipped, and during his effort to readjust it his horse took the bit in its mouth and became uncontrollable, dashing forward towards the barrier, behind which the spectators were sitting eight deep, as if minded to leap over it into the crowd. The Maharajah, conscious of the peril of the people, quick as a flash slipped out of his saddle to the ground, ran for several yards alongside his steed, which was



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going at full gallop, and, suddenly throwing all his weight on the bridle, brought the maddened animal up on its haunches not more than three feet from the point of danger.

Maharajah Sindhia loves to play practical jokes—always of a harmless nature. Once, when one of the greatest statesmen of our time was visiting him, every official on his staff received a note early in the morning of the first of April asking him to attend upon his employer at a given hour. The Maharajah's high officials also received similar letters. The hour set for the interview was very early and inconvenient for most of them, but all the Britons and Indians, with a single exception, presented themselves at the house occupied by the distinguished personage at the same hour, each ignorant of the fact that anyone else had been invited. The one exception was a shrewd official on the guest's staff, who had divined that the Maharajah of Gwalior had tried to make an "April fool" of him.

Not infrequently the Maharajah calls upon his high officials at all hours—very early in the morning and very late at night. He also inspects offices when no one is expecting a visit from him.

His Highness lavishes hospitality upon his friends, guests, and officials. On the table, laden with luxuries of every description, the products of the highest culinary art of the East and the West, is to be found an ingenious device which he himself invented. It is a sort of little railway running on lines, each car containing something to eat, or drink, or smoke. When a guest requires anything, instead of asking for it he presses a button, and the little train glides around on its circular track until the compartment containing what is desired comes in front of the person who is operating it.

The Maharajah's palace is furnished almost throughout in Western style. Among the many interesting articles in it I may mention huge chandeliers—among the largest, most powerful, and loveliest that human hands have ever fashioned.

## The Maharajah of Bikaner.

Among the Rajahs who have volunteered to fight for their Suzerain, the Maharajah of Bikaner, Colonel His Highness Raj Rajeshwar Narendra Shiromani Sri Sir Ganga Singh Bahadur, G.C.I.E., A.D.C., Hon. LL.D. Cambridge, occupies a unique position, for he is the only Indian ruler who has made it his business to master the science of military tactics as it is practised in the West and in the East. In conversing with an eminent military authority the other day, I heard the highest praise of the Maharajah's military capacity. My friend, who had seen him on field service, when His Highness accompanied his troops on one of the campaigns in which he has been engaged in fighting Britain's enemies, who has hunted with him on numerous occasions, and who has often watched him directing the manœuvres of his troops in his State, pronounced the highest encomiums upon the painstaking manner in which he has studied the latest methods of warfare, and the shrewdness with which he can discern favourable situations and the quickness with which he takes advantage of them to crush the enemy. A born Rajpoot, soldiering is the very breath of his life, and he has made every sacrifice in personal comfort to become a good general.

Though fond of good things to eat and drink, he never crosses the line that divides moderation from excess. Fond of late hours—he begins his evening meal at nine or ten o'clock at night, and guests take leave of him at two or three o'clock in the morning—he never for a moment forgets that above all he is a soldier, and must do nothing to damage his constitution.

His wonderful self-control, coupled with one of the hardiest bodies a man can possess, enables him to endure the greatest privations, to go without food and water for many long hours, and to rough it in every way that may be necessary. When on the battlefield or manœuvring he is not a prince, but lives like a private soldier. It may be recalled that, while serving with his unique camel corps in the China campaign of 1900–1, he helped his soldiers to pitch tents for the American contingent, which had arrived so fagged that it would have been inhuman to let them make their own camp. This action was in strict accord with his whole conduct during that campaign. He was frequently mentioned in despatches, and was decorated and given the title of K.C.I.E. in recognition of his services at that time. Once for all he demonstrated that he was not the sort of fighting Maharajah who goes to the field just for the glory of the thing but stays away from the firing-line, attended by boon companions, feasting and fêting out of harm's reach. When he is on the battlefield Maharajah Ganga Singh is a warrior.

His hardiness reminds one of his ancestry. His progenitor who founded the kingdom of Bikaner, Bhika by name, quarrelled with his

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**THE MAHARAJAH OF BIKANER.**
A MASTER OF MILITARY TACTICS.
*Photo. Vunayk*

family and left home in a rage, declaring that he and his retainers would not eat or drink until he had carved out a State of his own. Bhika kept his word so well that in history he is known as " Bhika of the Sharp Sword." Before the sun had set that night he had torn the territory now known as Bikaner from its possessors and driven its people away, establishing his own sway there. So powerful was he, and so mighty were his successors, that wealthy merchants brought their hoards from different parts of the peninsula and kept them in the city of Bikaner, where the hand of the plunderer, no matter how strong, could not wrest their belongings from them so long as the rule of Bhika's dynasty endured. It is a matter of common knowledge that this city, situated on a desert, has more millionaires to its three or four square miles than are to be found in Indian towns many times its size.

In keenness of eye and sureness of aim the Maharajah of Bikaner has no superior and few equals. Big and little game, bisons, lions, tigers, samburs, and ducks all know of this to their cost. There is no man in the world, Oriental or Occidental, who can equal his day's record for shooting wild duck.

The Maharajah's ability to use the " scattergun " is nothing short of marvellous. He handles the spear with almost as good effect, pig-sticking being his great delight.

Maharajah Ganga Singh does not permit soldiering and hunting to interfere with his giving his attention to administering his dominions, which are nearly twenty-four thousand square miles in area. His is a personal rule. There is not one department of State, military or civil, whose workings he does not himself guide and control.

## The Maharajah of Kishengarh.

An excellent representative of the new type of Maharajahs who are rapidly taking the place of administrators of the older order, whose ranks are being constantly thinned by death, is His Highness the Maharajah of Kishengarh, Maharaj Adhiraj Madan Singh Bahadur, K.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., now on the Continent with the Expeditionary Force. Born in 1884, he came to the throne in 1900 on the death of his father, the late Maharajah Sir Sardul Singh Bahadur, G.C.I.E. At that time he was only sixteen years old. He was therefore not invested with ruling powers until 1905, on his coming of age. During his minority he was carefully educated under British auspices, preparing to fill the responsible

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position that was awaiting him as soon as he reached his majority. He joined the Imperial Cadet Corps, and soon rose to be an under-officer. He showed such capacity for military leadership that on December 12th, 1911, he was given the honorary rank of major.

The Maharajah comes from fighting stock whose valorous deeds form some of the most thrilling episodes in the chronicles of Rajputana. One of his ancestors, Maharajah Rup Singh, finding that Aurangzebe, with whom he was engaged in battle, was gaining ground, rode right up to the elephant on which the great Mogul Emperor was seated, whipped his horse until it jumped as high as the saddle on the elephant, and slashed at his mighty foe with his sword while his steed was in the air, before it fell back to the ground. He was unable to hurt Aurangzebe, but killed his driver. Failing in this attempt, he instantly jumped from his horse, slipped under the elephant, and was cutting the ropes that bound Aurangzebe's saddle to the back of the big beast of the jungle, when the whole opposing army fell on him and cut him to pieces.

Soon after coming into power His Highness Madan Singh had an opportunity to show the mettle of which he is made. One of his feudatories who enjoyed a large grant of land from the State on military tenure—that is to say, on the basis of his furnishing a given number of troopers mounted and fully equipped whenever the Maharajah might need them—became obstreperous. In the previous reign the conduct of this baron—the Maharajah of Fatehgarh—had been far from satisfactory. Finding that a mere youth was ruling Kishengarh, his insolence knew no bounds. Young as he was, the present ruler at once appointed a commission composed of the leading nobles of his State, who tried the refractory chief, found him guilty of gross misdemeanour, and recommended that he should be dethroned. His Highness the Maharajah of Kishengarh promptly resumed the estate and granted the fallen Rajah a pension.

What time he can spare from the arduous work of administration the Maharajah of Kishengarh divides between sports and music. He is an accomplished polo-player, and has his own team, one of the strongest in India, which often takes part in tournaments. He is so fond of music that Indian musicians of note flock to his capital from all points of the peninsula. His Highness listens to them for hours at a time in the evening, and generously rewards those who catch his fancy. But he understands Indian music so well that it is no easy matter to please him. He objects to popular airs, and will not listen to anything that is not ultra-classical. By doing this he is exerting a powerful influence to revive the best musical traditions of India.

The Maharajah of Kishengarh is gradually introducing elements of modernization into his own life. A new wing, Western in style, has been added to the old palace, which is literally a fort. Cooks have been imported who can prepare European meals, and the Maharajah eats in approved Occider style. He does not permit caste or other p: udices to prevent him from dining with foreigners.

## Other Fighting Rajahs and Princes.

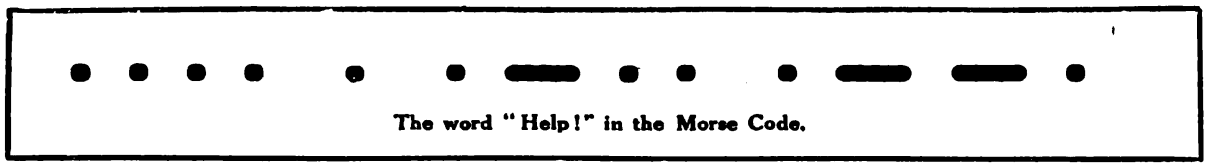
Prince (Maharaj Kumar) Hitindra Narayan was gazetted on October 15th an Honorary Lieutenant in the Army during his service with the Expeditionary Force.

Prince "Hitty," as he is popularly known, like his brother the Maharajah of Kuch Behar, is of a jovial disposition, full of humour, and with an inexhaustible fund of anecdotes to fit all occasions. He is only about twenty-four years old, and excels in games of all kinds, indoor and outdoor. Hunting is his especial delight, the vast jungles of Kuch Behar having furnished him plenty of opportunities for bringing down big game from his boyhood upwards. But of nothing is he so fond as of soldiering. In this respect he takes after his late father.

This by no means exhausts the list of the Rajahs and their relatives who have come or are coming over to fight for the British. The Maharajahs of Jodhpur, Idar, and Rutlam, and the Nawab of Sachin have accompanied the Expeditionary Force from India. The heir of the Begum of Bhopal, Colonel Sahebzada Nawab Muhammad Nasrullah Khan, the Prince (or Maharaj Kumar) of Tikari, Gopal Saran Narain Singh, and Rajkumar Hira Singh of Panna are also included in the party who have crossed the seas to fight Britain's battles. In addition to these, representatives of a number of other noble houses have volunteered for service.

Stories of these fighting Rajahs and Princes could be multiplied almost without end. But enough has been told to show that in possessing the co-operation of these powerful personages the British Empire has an asset whose value cannot be over-estimated.

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The word "Help!" in the Morse Code.

By

# BARRY PAIN.

## Illustrated by Gerald Leake, R.B.A.

I.

CECILY and Jacintha lived and worked in London, and on a fine Sunday in early spring they went out into the country. As they roamed, they saw white pear-blossom shimmering deliciously in the sunshine, and paused before a cottage garden where there were golden daffodils and deep-coloured fragrant wallflowers. In the porch of the cottage a man sat on a plain wooden chair, reading a Sunday paper. He was a plump and ruddy young man; and the first thing you saw when you looked at him was his tartan necktie.

Jacintha, for whom flower-scents had a special appeal, called bravely over the gate, "May we come in and smell your beautiful wallflowers?"

The man stared hard. "Yes, miss, if you like," he said, clumsily. He rose and opened the gate for them. As they stooped over the flowers, he picked rapidly.

"Care to take a few away with you?" he said, as he offered them.

Both the girls thanked him repeatedly, and dark-eyed Jacintha looked as if she loved him, though she did not. And then they came back to London—back to their little flat in Battersea—discussing, on the way, what Cecily ought to do about Mr. Keston. Really, he was a great trouble.

When Cecily and her friend first took the flat they did all the work of it themselves. But Cecily got more pupils, and Jacintha's incursion from dress-designing into house-decorating became profitable, and now Mrs. Peck came every morning, and sundry of the more severe economies were relaxed. They still cooked their evening meal themselves on weekdays, and washed up afterwards. But on Sundays they dined at a restaurant—tragically cheap and by no means bad—and returned to their flat for coffee. Coffee is the last perfection to which any restaurant attains.

Over their coffee to-night the Keston problem recurred. Mr. Keston was a man of thirty-five, and he was Cecily's best-paying pupil. He was also by far her most advanced and most musical pupil, and it was a pleasure to teach him when he would pay attention. But he was eccentric—terrifically eccentric. He had come into a good deal of money within the last few years, and he had previously been poor. Cecily thought the change of fortune must have affected his mind. He talked interminably. He interrupted the lessons. Once he insisted on showing her that he could tear a pack of cards in half—he was proud of his physical strength. He had a passion for dressing up, and devised costumes suitable for the different compositions that he played. He engaged an artist to paint a miniature of her, without previously consulting her, and of course the miniature was never painted. And at the very last lesson Cecily had been unable to do any teaching at all. He occupied the whole time with an exposition of his own pet Bedlamite theory of a correlation between tone and colour. "I myself," he had declared, "can hear a picture and can see a sonata."

"And it's not only that he half-frightens me," said Cecily. "It seems so dishonest to take the money when you're not really giving the lessons."

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"It would worry me more," said Jacintha, "if I were giving the lessons but not really taking the money. Cecily, I betake me to my bed."

"It's rather early."

"Very early. Also, I'm not the least bit tired. But if I leave you alone, you will go at once to the piano, which is what I want. A girl told me the other day that if you fell asleep to music you dreamed of Paradise."

"I must play very softly."

"No. Full strength, please, Saint Cecilia. A whisper keeps one awake. But since your own tame lunatic sees a correlation between tone and colour, try a correlation between tone and scent. Play in the same key as the scent of our wallflowers."

For some minutes after Jacintha had gone out Cecily sat with her head in her hands. She was trying to devise a letter which would get rid of Mr. Keston without offending him.

Then she gave it up and went to the piano. It was a fine and costly instrument. But Cecily, economical though she had been in most respects, had squandered capital on that piano. She got professional prices, of course.

She played, and played very well. As a pianist she was not in the first rank, but she was near it, and she realized the enormous distance that such propinquity implies. For the first there is fortune; Cecily could hardly have made a living as an executant, and found teaching more remunerative. She suffered from timidity, and played better in her own room than on the platform.

As she played, Jacintha came back into the room. She wore a scarlet kimono over her nightdress, and her feet were bare. She sat on the hearth-rug with her knees drawn up and her hands clasped over them, and watched Cecily. Cecily's beauty was of the saintly and spiritual type. Jacintha used to say that she had stepped straight out of a stained-glass window.

Jacintha herself was not beautiful, but she was rather fascinating. In her dark eyes, with their long lashes, there was sometimes laughter, sometimes tenderness, sometimes just a little wickedness. The commonplace face expresses but few shades of thought and emotion: Jacintha's face was mobile and finely expressive. Her colouring was delightful too; her complexion had that warm, creamy tint which is different from unhealthy pallor. And her figure was such a dream of young suppleness and grace that one quite forgot to note that her profile was not classical.

Cecily stopped playing. "It's a failure," she said. "I've not played you to sleep. I've kept you awake."

"Oh, I didn't really want to go to sleep. I'd only got tired of my clothes, and thought I should like the feel of the Sunday clean nightdress. And you're playing well to-night, though you're not in tune with the wallflowers."

"What key was I playing in?" said Cecily, severely.

"Don't know, and you know I don't. But the whole point is that you were playing in the minor, and that the scent of wallflowers is in the major. Lilies of the valley, gardenias, and hyacinths are in the minor, but roses, lavender, and wallflowers are in the major."

"I see what you mean. Now, Mr. Keston——"

"Forget him. I didn't know the thing you were playing. What was it?"

"Scriabine."

"*No!*"

"Yes—it was his early work, though."

"I thought it was a lucid interval. Now, Cecily, play this." She hummed a phrase.

Cecily hesitated. "You know I can't play Chopin."

"You can to me."

And again Cecily played. And it was not the frigid and correct reading which she gave on concert platforms. It was correct, but the sweetness and passion of the music were in it now.

"Oh!" said Jacintha. "That just tears one's heart out and bites it."

Cecily looked at her a little wistfully. "You know, you can't play. Your teacher was a duffer, and besides, you've never taken any trouble. You've no technique. And yet I sometimes think we ought to have changed professions. You're simply simmering with temperament, and the newspapers tell me that Miss Brook gave 'a flat and uninspired rendering.'"

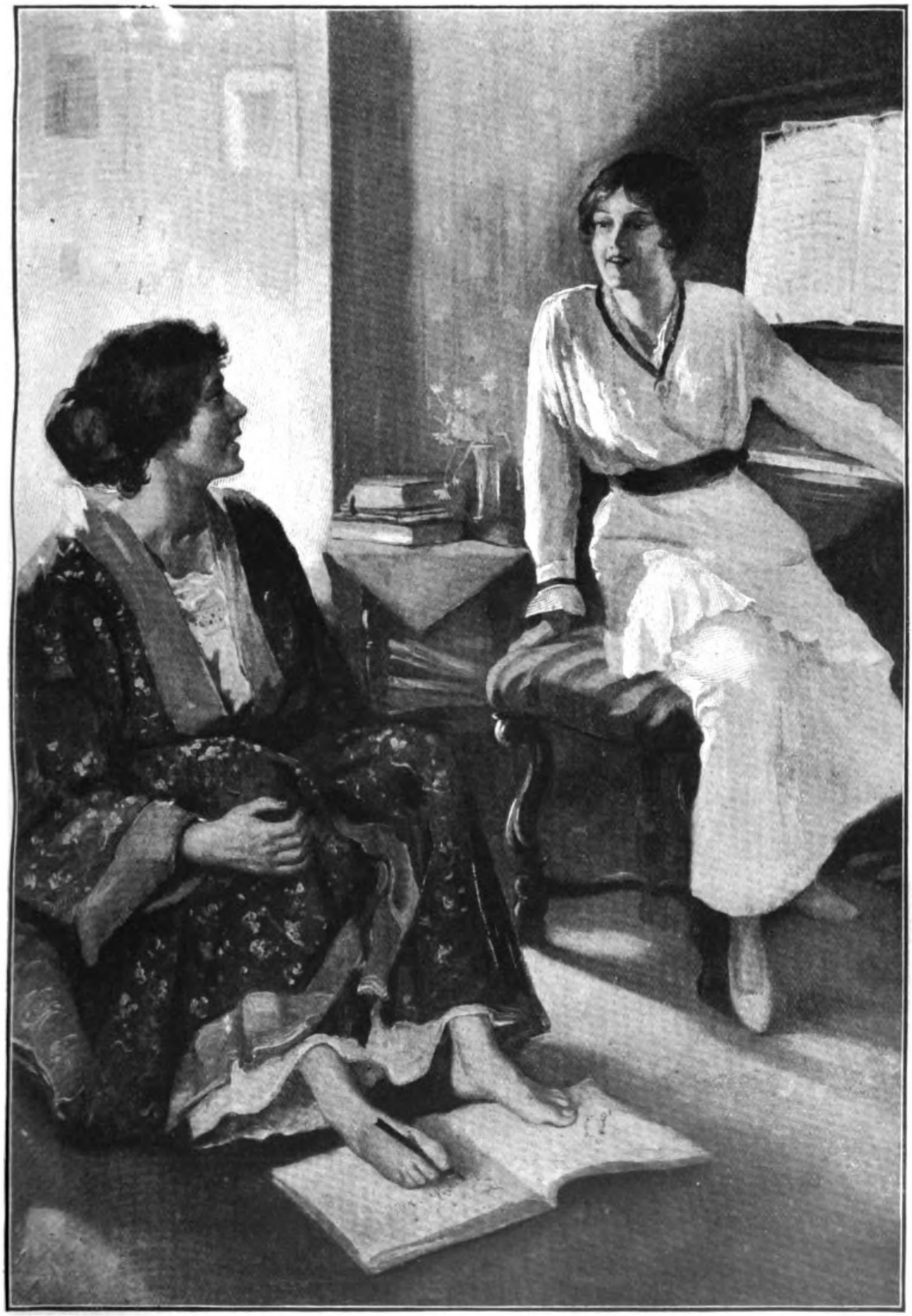
"You'd alter that if you would play to them as you play to me."

"That's where the trouble is. I can't do it with a lot of people I don't know looking at my face. I think of what they'll think, and I don't think enough of the singing of the music."

"That means that what you want is not my temperament, but my priceless and immortal cheek. We should never have looted that poor man's garden this afternoon if it hadn't been for me."

"That's true. Perhaps it was rather a shame. We practically made him give us those flowers—at least, you did."

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"WITH THE TOES OF THE RIGHT FOOT SHE HELD THE PENCIL, AND WROTE IN RATHER WAVERING BUT QUITE LEGIBLE CHARACTERS, 'DISGRACEFUL CONDUCT OF CECILY BROOK.'"

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"Yes, my sainted one, and he enjoyed it more than he enjoyed anything this day. Besides, in return I gave him the look."

"The look?"

"Yes, madam; our own patent. With the head slightly drooped, we slowly raise our celebrated eyelashes, and fix our gaze on the object to be hypnotized. We then turn on our *ah-si-vous-saviez* expression for five seconds and look downward again. Price, in box complete, one shilling."

"Jacintha," said Cecily, "anybody who didn't know you, and just heard you talk, would think you were either mad——"

"Or improper. And it would be a great shame, because I'm neither. I'm only a very little of each."

"I say, you ought to have put slippers on. Aren't your feet cold?"

Jacintha contemplated her feet, which were quite beautiful.

"Not a bit cold, and that reminds me. I'll show you something which I can do and you can't."

She placed an open sketchbook and a pencil on the floor. With the left foot she kept the book steady. With the toes of the right foot she held the pencil, and wrote in rather wavering but quite legible characters, "Disgraceful conduct of Cecily Brook. Drunk and disorderly in——"

But at this point Cecily, laughing, seized the book and deleted the libel.

"Really, I don't know what's the matter with you to-night, Jacintha. You're too awful. All the same, I certainly can't write with my foot myself. I should think precious few people could."

"Nobody. Nobody except Jacintha Herode and one of the chimps at the Zoo. It's a great gift, but there's very little money in it. I'd just as soon have technique and play heart-biters on the piano."

"Well, I'd love to give you lessons. You know I would."

"You're a good child, and I thank you. But I can't let you do it, and I'm too old to learn. Too old at twenty—ghastly thought! And now I really am going to bed."

By the first post next morning Cecily received a letter from Mr. Keston. It was a long letter, and it was somewhat incoherent. But the main point—that it was a proposal of marriage—was clear enough. It informed Cecily that she would act as the compensation of his temperament, and that her special musical knowledge would enable him to complete several theories which could not fail to benefit the world.

"Madder than a tram-full of mad hatters," said Jacintha, to whom the letter was submitted.

"Well, at any rate, that ends it," said Cecily. "I can't be expected to go on giving music lessons to a man whom I've just refused to marry."

"But it means one pupil less."

"Oh, that's all right," said Cecily. "There are fish in the sea."

And then she sat down and wrote a brief, kind, and intensely firm letter of dismissal. Apparently this upset Mr. Keston, for on the following day she got a postcard from him: "Take the consequences.—E. K."

"I'd take that to Scotland Yard," said Jacintha.

"Oh, it's only his silliness. If he bothers me any more I shall have to do something about it.'

But days passed, and Cecily got a new pupil, and heard nothing further from Mr. Keston. A cheque in payment of the lessons was sent by his solicitors.

## II.

"JACINTHA," said Cecily, one morning, "who's Amy Durrant?"

"Don't know," said Jacintha. "There was a Durrant in that awful post-office."

Jacintha had had a brief and tempestuous career as a telegraphist before following her artistic bent. "But," she added, "as he had a black moustache, his name was probably not Amy."

"This one's a portrait painter."

"And no good at it either. If she had been, I should have known about her."

"Well, she gets sitters anyhow. In fact, she wants me to go to her studio on Saturday to play to the old lady she's painting now."

"How much?"

"Three guineas. Says she heard me play at Lady Pirchester's."

"Then I shouldn't worry. Just wade in and earn the money. Where did you meet dear Amy?"

"I haven't met her yet. She writes from a studio in Northwood—just outside Northwood. Here's the letter."

Jacintha sniffed at the letter.

"I'm much afraid our dear Amy smokes cigarettes. These artists!"

"I noticed that, too."

"Well, it seems all right. Heaps of directions and instructions, aren't there?"

"Yes; I should imagine that she is rather a particular person. But I shall go, of course. It might lead to more work of the same kind."

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"And why are you to play to the sitter? To keep her face animated?"

"I hadn't thought about it."

"That's it. You know how the human face at the photographer's looks—like a paralyzed and self-conscious fish. I've got a photograph of myself that I look at only on Ash Wednesday. Cecily, if Saturday is a decent sort of day, I'll go down to Northwood with you."

"Would you really? That would be ripping. But what will you do while I am playing?"

"While you're animating the old lady's face? How long will you be at it?"

"An hour."

"Oh, that's all right. I'll wander about. There's a park near there with absolutely authentic deer in it. And afterwards we might go for a walk and perhaps get supper out in the country somewhere."

Saturday afternoon was fine, and the two girls went down to Northwood together by train. Following the directions in the letter, they had no difficulty in finding the house. It was a little way out of Northwood, and, as Jacintha observed, within a quarter of a mile of the cottage where one Sunday they had been given wallflowers.

It was one of a pair of semi-detached houses, with small gardens in front and long gardens behind. Looking past the side of the house, one could see the studio, solidly built of brick, at the far end of the garden.

"There you are," said Jacintha. "I'll go and ring the front-door bell and say that the girl's called with the music."

"No, no; I'm not to ring the bell at all. I'm to go straight through the garden to the studio. And I can't yet, because I'm ten minutes too early. I say, isn't it a shame? Poor Miss Durrant's house has got no flag-pole, and the other one has."

"I don't fancy it's a flag-pole. Looks to me as if it were connected with a wireless installation. It's the aerial. There are a good many of these private wireless stations about."

And then round the corner came tramping a fat and rubicund young man. He was not wearing the tartan necktie, and so looked a little as if his headlight had gone out, but the girls recognized him, and said good afternoon as he touched his cap.

He entered Miss Durrant's garden, fished up from behind the hedge a notice-board announcing that the house and studio were to let furnished, and came into the road with the board over his shoulder.

"Hope you young ladies weren't thinking of taking the place? Let last week. I'm just fetching the board away."

"Oh, no," said Jacintha, "it's too big for us. Wallflowers all finished?"

"All over now, miss." And in a desperate effort at politeness he added, "Thank you for inquiring."

"Time's up," said Cecily, when he had gone. "I must be off to the studio."

"Did dear Amy tell you in her letter that she had only just taken the place?"

"No. But why should she? You'll be back here sharp at four, won't you? Ta-ta!"

Cecily went through the gate and down the garden path to the studio. Jacintha walked a few paces down the road and then stopped short.

Yes, she remembered it. Miss Durrant, in her letter to Cecily, directing her how to find the house, had used the phrase, "the way we always take." Would she have done that if she had been in the house only a few days? Why was Cecily not to ring at the house? Wasn't it a little preposterous to employ a professional pianist for the purpose for which Cecily had been engaged? Somebody to read to the sitter would have served the purpose. It might be all right, of course. But it might not.

Jacintha turned back again. She went down the garden to the studio, and listened outside it. If she had heard the piano being played, she would have gone away happy and reassured. But not a sound of any kind could she hear. The windows of the studio were double, and they were all closed—strange on a warm day like that. Jacintha became more and more uneasy. She tapped on the heavy door before her. After all, if a woman's voice told her to enter, she could easily invent a message to Cecily.

But there was no answer of any kind. And then Jacintha knew definitely that there was something wrong. She turned the handle of the door, pushed it open, and entered.

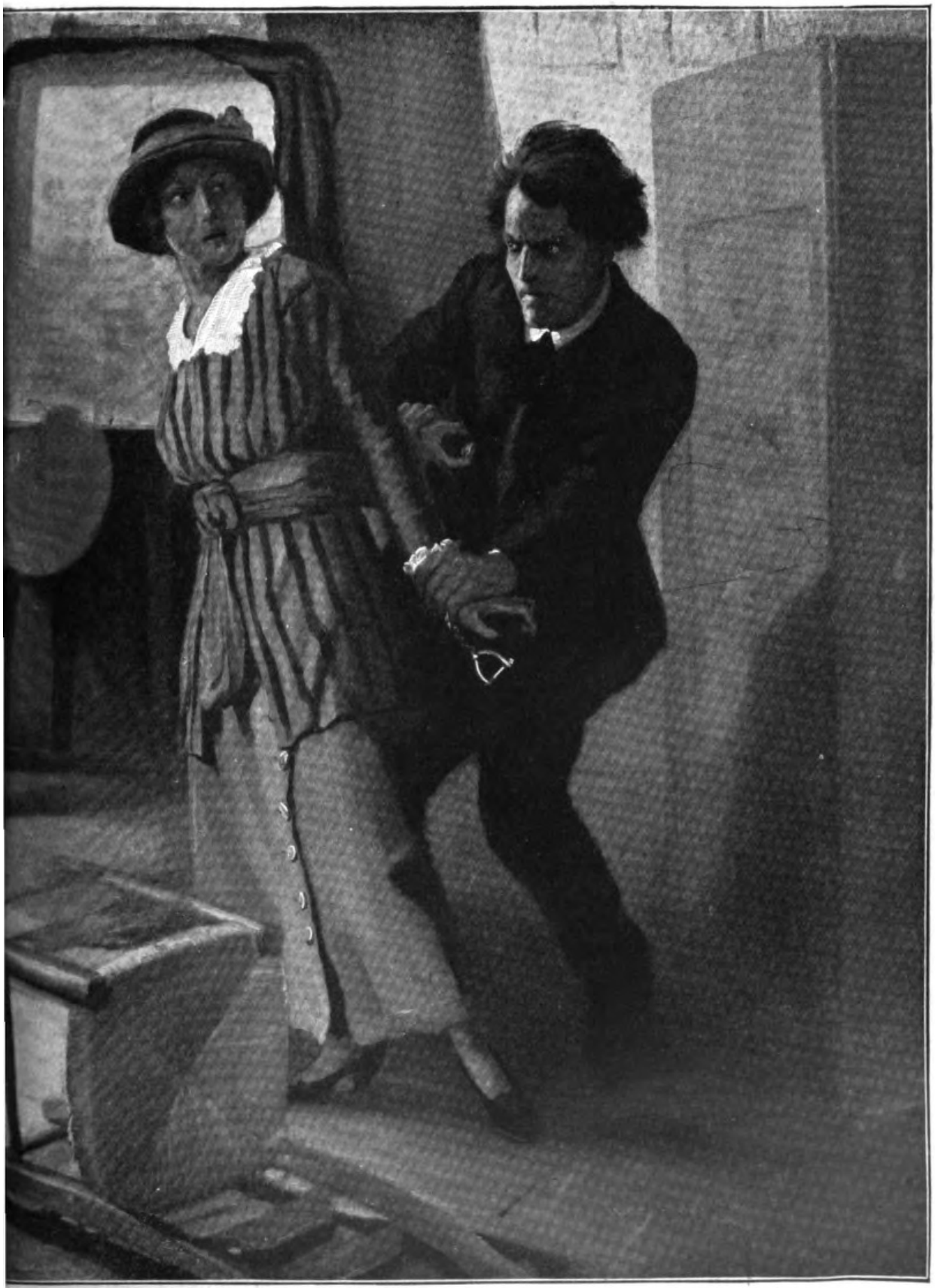
Never before in her life had so many sensations been crowded into one moment of time. She saw before her the sparsely-furnished studio, and in the middle of it Cecily handcuffed, with a chain from the handcuffs to a heavy iron ring in the floor. She heard her crying, "Oh, Jacintha, look out! What are we to do?" and at the same moment heard the door close behind her, and also at the same moment felt her wrists gripped from behind in a very definite and final grip. A second later she felt the cold steel on her wrists. She realized that she also had been handcuffed.

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"SHE FELT HER WRISTS GRIPPED FROM BEHIND

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IN A VERY DEFINITE AND FINAL GRIP."

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And the man who had done it now stepped forward. He was a man of fine athletic figure. His height was over six feet. He was even a handsome man but for the insanity in his eyes. His manner was very quiet, very confident. He smiled as he spoke.

"Miss Herode, I believe. I had allowed for the possibility that you would both come, though I had not expected to have the pleasure of seeing you for an hour or more. I fear something must have happened to make you suspicious. Miss Brook had spoken to me of you sometimes, always charmingly. And you were quite right to be suspicious. If I have been a little rough with you, you must forgive me. So much is at stake, you see."

Jacintha was pulling herself together. Cecily was on the verge of collapse, and somehow this seemed to give Jacintha fresh courage. It would all depend on what she said and did.

"Is your name Keston?" she asked, in a voice that did not quaver.

"Yes, yes—Edward Keston."

"Well, Mr. Keston, I ask you to help us—to rescue us. Take off these handcuffs, open the door, and let us go. It would be a fine thing to do. You would have reason to be proud of yourself."

The madman hesitated.

"True," he said, "quite true. Chivalrous, eh? I've always been chivalrous. Devotion to women is with me almost a religion."

"Splendid," said Jacintha. "That's noble. I think perhaps you'd better release my friend first."

"Oh, I'm not going to release anybody," said Keston. "I should love to do it, but it's quite impossible. Let me explain the situation to you. I offered Miss Brook a collaboration—a form of collaboration—which would confer inestimable benefits on humanity. She refused—perhaps rightly, perhaps wrongly. The trouble is that people got to hear of it—columns about it in the papers, questions in Parliament, large coloured posters on the walls, and a great deal of feeling has been aroused, and pressure has been put upon me. People point at me in the street and say that I am responsible. In church last Sunday I heard a bishop say that if I did not remove Miss Brook I should be a traitor and a reprobate. Made a great impression on me—very great."

Jacintha tried to speak, but he silenced her with a wave of his hand.

"You must admit that I have arranged things well. This studio is the trap, the music was the bait, and I've caught my two dear little mice. It was built, this place was, for a neurasthenic artist. As you see, it is specially constructed to keep sound out, and therefore it keeps sound in. I have tested it. You can shriek as much as you like here. If I had made the mistake of taking you into the house your screams might have been heard by the people in the house adjoining. But the studio is—is absolutely perfect for my purpose, especially when you consider that big gas-stove."

Jacintha made one last attempt.

"But the bishop did not say you ought to remove me. I don't think he'd like it. You must clearly let me go at once."

"Well, you see, Miss Herode, if I did you'd interfere. You'd bring policemen and doctors. Come, come, you're wasting my time. There is a second chain attached to that ring in the floor. Don't struggle, or I shall get violent."

Jacintha did not struggle, and the other end of the chain was fastened to the handcuffs. It was just long enough to allow her to stand upright, and she remained standing. Cecily had sunk down on the floor, shivering with fear.

The madman glanced at his watch.

"I see," he said, "that I shall be able to catch an earlier train back than I had expected. I took this house and studio for three months. It is improbable that you will be disturbed before the end of that time. Meanwhile, to accelerate matters"—here he stooped and turned the tap of the gas-stove—"suffocation by coal-gas, you observe. Good evening."

The door opened and shut in a moment, and he was gone. They heard the key turn.

"Jacintha," moaned Cecily, "we're going to die. We're going to die! And I brought you here."

"No, dear; it's all right. I can turn that gas off."

As she spoke she dragged one foot out of the shoe. Then sitting on the floor, as far away from the ring as the chain would let her go, she could just reach the tap with her foot. The toe moved in the thin stocking, and the tap was turned.

"That saves us," said Cecily. "Oh, Jacintha, what should I have done without you?"

"Yes, it saves us for the present. But that will be no good unless we can get out. He might change his mind and come back, but I doubt it. We shall have to think of something. We won't talk—just try to find something."

They sat in silence. Cecily, infected now

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with a little of Jacintha's courage, studied the walls and the floor.

Suddenly she said :—

" Look, Jacintha ! There's a bell-push by the side of the stove. Is it any good ? "

" Let me see. Where does that bell ring ? Obviously in the house. When the neurasthenic artist wanted anything, he rang."

" Yes, but there's no one in the house. Keston told me so."

" Very likely, but there are people in the house adjoining, and they will probably hear it. Wait ! Oh, I've got it, Cecily ! "

" What do you mean ? "

" You remember the flag-pole ? That's a private wireless station. Oh, I never thought I should be thankful for knowing the Morse code, but I am. I can send a message with that bell, and if the private wireless next door is there he will understand it."

" But if he is not there ? "

" The servants will hear it, and they will know that the house is not occupied yet. They may not know the code, but they will recognize that it is a signal of some sort. Cheer up, Cecily ; we're going to get out of this after all."

" If you hadn't come back, I should have been killed, Jacintha. Why did you come back ? "

" I'll tell you later. I must get to work."

The bell was easier to reach than the tap on the other side of the stove had been. Jacintha began ringing with her great toe.

" What are you signalling ? " asked Cecily.

" I'm sending the word ' Help ! ' three times, and then the word ' Studio.' I send that over and over again, with pauses in between."

" Isn't that position uncomfortable ? "

" Rather. It's also undignified. But as long as it gets us out of this——"

It seemed to Cecily that Jacintha had been signalling for a long time, and so far nothing had happened.

" Do you think," she asked, " that he could have cut the wire, or that the batteries have run out ? "

" He was cunning, and he might have cut the wire, but I don't think he did. The possibility that I could get my shoe off and telegraph with my toe wouldn't have occurred to him. And the batteries have not run out, because people who are trying to let their house and studio furnished leave things in good order."

Again for some minutes she continued sending the message. Then she said she must rest a minute or two.

" Will it be any good to go on again ? " said Cecily.

" I shall go on again for at least an hour. Then if nothing happens, it will probably mean that the bell is not heard in the house."

" And then ? "

" Then, Cecily, we'll shout. The windows are double, and that door's tremendously thick and heavy—padded on the inside, too. Still, the place may not be so absolutely soundproof as Keston said."

" But, Jacintha, if that fails too ? "

" Then we must think of something else. Now I'll ring again."

They sat in silence for some minutes, while Jacintha continued to ring, and then Cecily exclaimed, " Look ! The handle of the door ! We're saved ! "

Undoubtedly the handle moved, and the door was shaken slightly.

" I needn't ring any more. Stand up, Cecily, and don't cry, or I'll never forgive you."

Both girls rose to their feet, and Jacintha succeeded incredibly in an effort to get her foot back in her shoe again. Then came a bump against the wall of the studio, and almost immediately the head and shoulders of a clever young man appeared against the window. Cecily and Jacintha agreed afterwards that he was one of the few young men they had ever met who convinced them of ability before he had said or done anything. With the handle of his pocket-knife he broke a pane of glass in the outer window and another in the inner window.

" Thought I'd better climb up on the roller and see what the trouble was," he called through. " Can you wait for a few minutes while I get my tools and engineer that lock, or shall I get you water or something first ? "

" Thank you—thank you ever so much ! " said Cecily and Jacintha both together. And then Jacintha took the solo part. " Yes, we can wait. We've only been here about an hour. We're chained and handcuffed."

" I see. I've got something up at the workshop that will cut those things like butter. Sha'n't be a moment longer than I can help."

He jumped down from the roller, and—now that the windows were broken—they could hear his steps as he ran up the gravel path. A cool breeze blew in. They were no longer buried in a prison out of the world ; they were getting back to life again. Cecily smiled, but there were tears in her eyes. Jacintha was very pale.

They heard almost directly his returning

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steps, and then the clank of tools thrown down.

"Sha'n't be long now," he sang out, cheerily. "Are you all right?"

Cecily and Jacintha thanked him in chorus, and said they were quite all right, which was not true.

A little precise picking at the lock, and then a loud crack, and the door opened.

"I'll just snip the chains, and we can finish the handcuffs up at the house. My mother will look after you, and you can tell us how it happened afterwards."

He snipped the chain that held Cecily, and then turned to Jacintha.

"Thing that bothers me," he said, "is how on earth one of you managed to send that message by the electric bell, when you couldn't possibly have reached the push with your fingers."

"I can do some things," said Jacintha, speaking very slowly, and with her eyes swimming, "with my toes."

And having said it, she dropped fainting into the young man's arms.

III.

"CECILY," said Jacintha, a few nights later, "if



"SHE DROPPED FAINTING INTO THE YOUNG MAN'S ARMS."

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you persist in talking to me as if I were a blend of Boadicea, Joan of Arc, and the Pankhurst family, I shall have to leave you. What I actually did was to make an Early Victorian idiot of myself. People who faint ought to be ashamed of themselves, and I am ashamed of myself, and you sha'n't stop me."

"All I said was that but for you I shouldn't have been sitting here drinking coffee at this moment."

"And it's all wrong. It's Mr. Grierson that we've got to be eternally grateful to."

"It was an awful time," said Cecily, "and all that stuff about it in the newspapers has been horrible, but at any rate it made us get to know two remarkably nice people. Mrs. Grierson is simply an angel, and doesn't look nearly old enough to have a son of twenty-one. She's quite pretty, too."

"Do you think the son's good-looking?"

"I like him immensely."

"But that's not what I asked."

"Oh, well, it's not a thing that matters. He looks clever and alert, but nobody could possibly call him a handsome man."

"I do. He looks the way a man ought to look. And I'm sorry that I was such an awful nuisance to him."

"He doesn't regard you like that."

"He must. We interrupted him in the afternoon, and kept him busy all the rest of the day. We let him drive us back to London in his car. We ought to have insisted on going back by train."

"We did insist, but it didn't make any difference. There was only one thing that you did that I didn't quite like."

"Tell me it instantly."

"Well, you remember telling me about 'the look'—the look that you gave to tartan necktie in exchange for the wallflowers—the trick with the eyelashes, and——"

"Yes, yes, what about it?"

"When you said good night to Mr. Grierson, you gave him 'the look,' and it didn't seem quite fair to fool him, after all he——"

"Cecily, I didn't. Don't say I did."

"Yes, really."

Jacintha covered her face with her hands.

"It's too awful," she said. "I never meant to do it. I didn't know I had done it. Oh, I wish I was dead."

Cecily smiled.

"Jacintha, I think I'll tell you something that happened when we were lunching there yesterday."

"When he talked to you so much more than he did to me. Quite right, too."

"He asked me if you were engaged to be married, and I told him you were not."

"Quick—go on!"

"He said it was incredible, but that it was the best news he'd heard for a long time."

"Cecily, you don't mean that you think——"

"I feel quite certain. He said other things too, but I shall let him tell you those himself."

"I'm frightened. I want to go away and hide."

"Jacintha, dear, tell me the truth. It all seemed so obvious to an onlooker. Did you never yourself see that he adored you?"

"I—I—I sometimes thought he rather liked me."

"And you——"

"I don't know. I mean, it's not like anything I ever knew before. Oh, Cecily, I can't talk. Play to me. Play Chopin."

Cecily went to the piano. As she played the room grew gradually darker, but Jacintha did not switch on the lights.

The last notes died away.

"That was wonderful—unearthly," said Jacintha. There were a few minutes of silence, and then Jacintha spoke again, and not about the music. "Oh, but a thing like that, Cecily—a thing like that—it couldn't possibly come true."

But it did come true.

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# JAPANESE JUGGLING TRICKS

## And How They Were Invented.

### ROMANTIC AND INTERESTING STORIES.


### By M. GINTARO.

### Done into English by Wellesley Pain.


*Photographs, except where otherwise stated, by Sport & General.*

WHEN people talk to me about Japanese jugglers I generally have to answer this question: "How is it that all you Japanese jugglers do the same things?"

Well, I do not agree that all our performances are exactly alike, but I will confess to a good deal of "sameness." It is inevitable, because all the feats of real Japanese jugglers were originated in Japan by the Japanese, and no juggler of my country would care to perform any other feats.

Some of our most effective feats are very old, and a kind of tradition attaches to each of them. Take, for instance, the familiar balancing feat performed with blocks of wood (Fig. 1). I build up a pile of these blocks ten or eleven feet high, and place a glass of water on the top. Then I push the bottom block very gently on one side with my fan, but before the whole pile can fall I slip my fan under the bottom block and balance the pile on my fan. Then I throw up the pile of blocks and catch the glass without spilling a drop of the water.



Fig. 1.—A very difficult trick with wooden blocks. *Photo. Talma, Melbourne.*

This is only one of very many feats performed with these ordinary blocks of wood. I am able to perform with these blocks for two hours; as a rule, the feats I present to English audiences last for five minutes.

These feats are based on those devised by a Japanese prisoner in the seventeenth century. In those days the Japanese wore their hair long, and, to protect it during the hours of sleep, very high pillows were used. Even the occupants of the jails had to be provided with pillows; plain wooden blocks, similar to those used to-day by Japanese jugglers, served the purpose.

The particular prisoner to whom jugglers will always be grateful probably suffered from insomnia; at any rate, he amused himself by throwing up the blocks in his cell and catching

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Fig. 2. — The umbrella trick. By causing the umbrella to revolve, the ball is made to run round the brim.

them. Then he devised various simple little balancing feats with the blocks, and the exercise he obtained in this way improved his physique.

His appearance became too good. The authorities could not understand how a man living on a little food could contrive to put on flesh. The juggling prisoner was watched, and, being caught in the act, was taken to the governor of the prison. The prisoner was commanded to perform. Tradition does not say what were the actual feats he presented, but they impressed the governor, who had the man taken to the civil authorities of the town. In the end the prisoner was released, because he was appointed Court Entertainer to the governor of the State.

I believe this story to be quite true, for juggling is certainly one of the finest forms of exercise any man can take—until he becomes proficient. All the time he is learning a feat he drops things on the floor, and I understand that the beneficial exercise is obtained by stooping down to pick up things.

Feats with an umbrella—of the Japanese kind—are very common. The juggler throws up a ball, catches it on the top of an open umbrella, and, by twisting the handle rapidly, causes the ball to run round the edge of the umbrella (Fig. 2). A similar feat is performed with curtain rings and with coins; the smaller and lighter the coin the more difficult the feat.

All these feats were originated by a street performer in Japan. One day, while passing under the walls of a castle, a small audience collected on the top of the wall and playfully dropped some tangerines on to the comedian of the company of strolling jugglers. (No such company is complete without a comedian.) The next day the comedian was treated in the same manner, and so he put up a paper umbrella to shield himself. The shower of tangerines broke through the umbrella. Then the leading juggler of the company saw his opportunity. He took the umbrella, twisted it quickly, and, by making it revolve, caused the tangerines to fly off it. While he was doing this he was helped by a lucky accident. One of the tangerines rolled round the umbrella once before dropping on the ground. The juggler picked up the tangerine and caught it once more on his revolving umbrella, and thus the feat I have described was invented. The hardest feat of all with the umbrella is done with a Japanese coin which is lighter than an English farthing.

The oldest juggling feats in the world are those known by the title "Ball and Stick" (Fig. 3). Some performers will use two balls and all of them will use two sticks, but "ball and stick" is the English name for this group of tricks.

The stick is a drumstick, for the feat was originated by a drummer who played outside a Japanese temple. Thinking to engage the attention of passers-by (for the jugglers are, in a sense, officials of the temple), this drummer made a number of flourishes with his stick, similar to those used to this day by drummers in the British Army. Then the drummer learned how to throw up his stick and catch it again in a variety of ways. Afterwards he did the same thing with two sticks. One day he saw some



Fig. 3. — One of the many ball-and-stick feats. In this trick the ball is passed from one stick to the other.



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Fig. 4.—Japanese top-spinning—Balancing on the finger.

children playing with a ball several simple games very much like those played by English children to this day. The drummer conceived the idea of doing something with a ball and his two sticks, and so the foundation for a long series of juggling feats was laid.

In Japan the first lesson in juggling is always given with one of these drumsticks. A boy is taught to throw up the stick so that it turns over and over in the air, and to catch it again by the right end. The feat looks absurdly easy, but in reality it is very difficult. This feat affords an excellent training for the eye and hand. A practice lesson, by the way, occupies two hours, and it is usually given at sunrise. During the day the pupil has to attend school, where one of his duties is to learn a musical instrument. All Japanese jugglers, being servants of the temple, have to be musicians.

The drumsticks used by Japanese jugglers are painted silver-colour and are tipped with red. There is a reason for this. The drum of the man who originated the feats was ornamented with a picture of the sun, and the drummer imagined — or induced his audiences to imagine—that the reflection of the sun could be seen at the top of the stick. Each stick is exactly three and a half "hands" in length.

All the various feats of tub-spinning were originated by a Japanese street performer. The man was challenged by the proprietor of a restaurant to spin a large tub standing near the door of the restaurant. Near the tub, which was full of water, was a bowl with a long handle. This bowl was used for the purpose of watering the road to lay the dust. The juggler accepted the challenge. He emptied the tub, pulled the long handle from the bowl, and did the trick. Then he went away and elaborated the feat until he could throw up the tub while it was spinning and catch it again on the stick. He learned to do many things with that tub, and then he went back to the proprietor of the restaurant and won a much larger reward for his trouble.

Top-spinning (Fig. 4) is one of the national games of Japan. The first whip-top was made—accidentally—many years ago by a Japanese gentleman. It was the custom in those days for the best people in Japan to exercise themselves by cutting wood. One day a man, having cut a block from a rhododendron, drove a nail into it and tossed it over to a friend, telling him to hang it up to dry. The friend

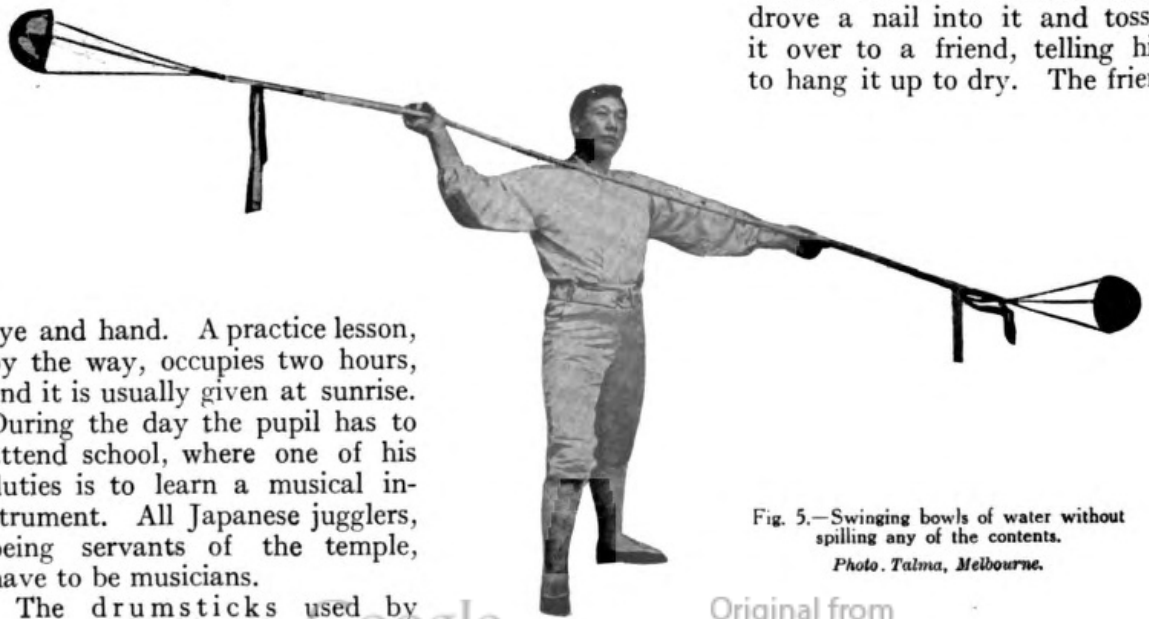


Fig. 5.—Swinging bowls of water without spilling any of the contents.
*Photo. Talma, Melbourne.*

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Fig. 6.—From two razors hang bands of tissue paper. The trick is to break the stick hanging in the two bands without breaking the papers. Quite simple —when you have practised!

did not catch the wood, and the block spun round on the nail. The man who had cut it slipped off the cord from his native costume and whipped the round block of wood to keep it spinning. That was the origin of the whipping-top as used in England to-day.

The pastime of top-spinning was introduced by a quack doctor, who looked about him for some way of drawing a crowd towards him. His chief stock-in-trade, by the way, was tooth-powder. He performed a few simple feats with tops, and other people copied them merely as an amusement.

The best tops are very valuable, and they are handed down from father to son. The care which a violinist gives to his instrument is not greater than that which a Japanese juggler bestows on his tops. The skill required to spin the tops properly is not easily acquired, and it seems to be hereditary. I know a good performer in Japan who can trace his descent back through sixteen generations of top-spinners.

The best tops will cost as much as ten pounds apiece, but in Japan one can buy a top—of a kind—for a farthing. The best top is one which is as true as a billiard-ball; my best top will spin for half an hour at a time. I have tried to induce an English wood-turner to make me a top similar to this, but so far the experiment has not been quite successful, although some of the tops I have had made for me in this country have been excellent. The high price of the best tops is due, of course, to the fact that only about one in a hundred tops is practically perfect.

It is possible to give a performance with tops which will last for four or five hours. In Japan little plays are written round tops, and the tops take the parts of the characters.

One of my favourite feats is that of swinging round two bowls of water attached to the ends of a long cord, without spilling a drop of the water (Fig. 5). It is difficult. Here is an easier one which anyone can try. It is really a feat of Japanese swordsmanship which anyone can practise without a sword. Make two bands of tissue paper, about a yard long and an inch wide. Get a friend to hold two razors, one in each hand. Open the razors and hang the bands of paper on the blades. Now take a stick and hang it on the bands of paper. This must be done very carefully, or the papers will be cut. Then pick up a broomstick and with a mighty blow come down on the centre of the stick. If you are successful you will break the stick without breaking the bands of paper (Fig. 6).

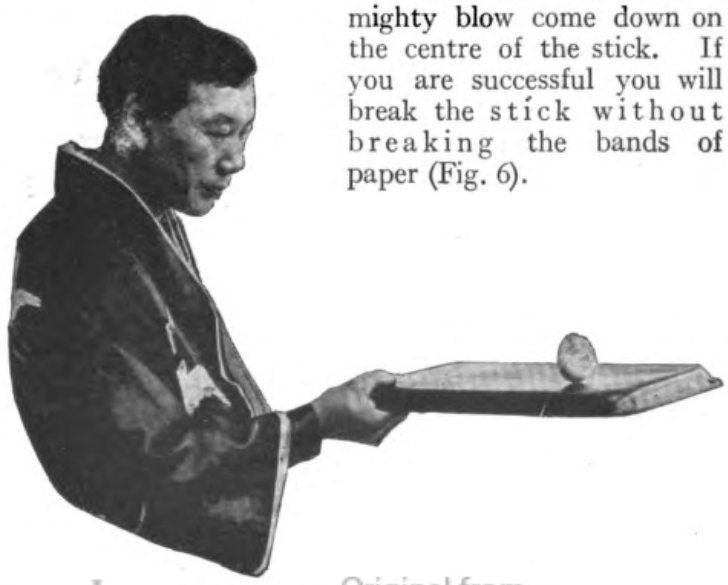


Fig. 7.—Spinning a blown egg on a tray.

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The blow must be given quickly, and immediately before the blow is given the broomstick should be brought up very rapidly so that the stick resting on the papers is lifted slightly by the current of air caused by the upward movement of the broomstick.

A simpler and easier experiment is that of causing an egg to spin on a tray by merely turning the tray with a circular motion (Fig. 7). The egg should be a blown one. Place it on the tray near the hand. Then cause the egg to move round the tray by slanting the tray in different directions. When the egg is well on the move keep the tray level and turn it round and round with a wide sweep of the arm. The motion will cause the egg to spin quickly on its side, and if the movement is kept up the egg will eventually spin so fast on its side that it will raise itself and spin on its end. The tray must then be held still and level. The feat is not nearly so difficult as it appears to be. I shall be giving object lessons in this and other simple juggling feats during my performances at St. George's Hall this Christmas.



Fig. 8.—Rest a tray on four glasses of water. (The water was coloured to make it "come out" in the photograph.) Then exactly over the glasses place four cardboard tubes, and on the tubes four hard-boiled eggs. Knock away the tray quickly and—

To snatch a cloth from a tea-table without upsetting the tea-things is not difficult, especially if you have a cloth without a hem. The pull must be in a line with the top of the table, and it must be given quickly and without any hesitation.

Here is a feat which requires a little practice (Figs. 8 and 9). Put some water into four glasses and lay a tea-tray over them. On the tray, immediately over the glasses, stand four little cardboard tubes. (These can easily be made by bending postcards into tubes and fastening them with stamp-paper.) On the tubes place four eggs. It will be advisable for the beginner to use hard-boiled eggs; small apples will do equally well. Now open the hand, and with the outstretched palm give the tray a sharp blow in such a way that the cardboard tubes are knocked away and the eggs fall into the glasses of water. The blow must not be "followed up"; the hand should remain stationary when the tray has been knocked away. It must be a hard blow, and it is as well to have someone to catch the tray.



Fig. 9.—The eggs will fall into the glasses. This is nothing like so difficult as it looks. It can also be done with small oranges or apples in place of the eggs.

For the performance of the next simple feat (Fig. 10) the knowledge of a little secret

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is necessary. Remove the egg from one of the glasses used in the previous feat. Take a strip of paper about an inch wide and six inches long and hold it with one end on the edge of the glass. Now lay a penny—very carefully—over the end of the strip of paper, so that the penny is balanced over the paper on the edge of the glass. The feat consists in removing the paper, using only one hand, without disturbing the balance of the penny. The feat is quite simple if two hands are used, because with one hand you can hold the free end of the paper while with the other you give a sharp blow on the centre of the paper and so draw it away from the glass. But only one hand is to be used. To do this, take a knife or ruler and bring it down very quickly on the paper; the feat cannot be done with certainty in any other way.



Fig. 10.—Take a strip of paper and rest it on the edge of a glass, with a penny balanced on it. The trick is to pull the paper away with one hand so that the penny remains balanced on the glass.



Fig. 11.—Stand a bowler hat on an empty bottle, and on the side of the crown rest a cork with a threepenny-piece on the top. Pull the hat away quickly and the coin will drop into the bottle.



Fig. 12.—A test for a steady hand. The glass should be about half full of water. The weight of the water enables you to balance it as shown in the photograph; but you must have a very steady hand.

For the accomplishment of our next feat (Fig. 11) the amateur must have what is known as a "straight eye." Place the crown of a bowler hat on the top of a bottle in the position shown in the accompanying photograph. On the top side of the crown of the hat, immediately over the mouth of the bottle, place a cork, and on the cork lay a threepenny-piece. Pull the hat away very quickly, and, if the building-up has been done properly, the cork will fall to the ground and the coin into the bottle.

A feat requiring a very steady hand can be performed with a glass half-full of water. The feat consists in balancing the glass on its edge on the table (Fig. 12). The slightest movement of the floor of the room renders the feat impossible, but it can be done after a very little practice by anyone with a



Fig. 13.—A small tube of cardboard stands on the tray over the glass of water. On the top of the tube is an egg, on the top of the egg a small cork, and on the top of the cork three pennies. Knock away the tray quickly, and with the same hand catch the three pennies.

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steady hand — or, rather, two steady hands.

The following (Fig. 13) is a more showy feat. Place a small tray over a tumbler half-full of water. On the tray, immediately over the glass, place one of the cardboard tubes used in a previous trick, and on the tube a hard-boiled egg. On the egg balance a cork. It may be necessary to scoop out the bottom of the cork to make it stand on the egg. On the top of the cork place three pennies. Now knock away the tray and, with the same hand, catch the three pennies. The egg should fall into the glass.

An easier one (Fig. 14). Take the cap from a fountain-pen, turn it upside down, and put a visiting-card on the top. Put a penny on the card, and on the penny a small nut. Now flick away the card with the thumb, so that the penny, with the nut on it, is balanced on the cap. Then flick away the penny so that the nut remains there.



Fig. 14.—On the top of the cap of a fountain-pen place a visiting-card, on the card place a penny, and on the penny a small nut. Flick away the card without disturbing the balance of the penny, which with the nut is left on the top of the cap.



Fig. 15.—Spinning a penny on the bottom of a glass by blowing on the penny. Begin by blowing gently under the coin; then—

Fig. 16. — When the coin is being turned, blow slightly on one side of it. Blow gently and keep the glass level. Note the position of the forefingers necessary for ensuring a good balance.

Our final feat (Figs. 15 and 16) shall be one which I frequently do in public. I borrow a penny from the audience and place it on the bottom of an inverted soda-water glass. Holding the glass with both hands, I blow under the penny and cause it to spin on the glass.

The learner should note the position of my hands in the photographs. By holding the glass with the forefingers pointed upwards I am able to get the glass quite level. The feat is impossible if the glass is not level. To begin with, I blow under the coin; when it has begun to spin I blow on one side of it. It is not necessary to blow hard to make the coin spin, and when the coin is spinning properly its movement on the glass is noiseless. The glass should be slightly concave.

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# The Amazing Visitor.

## By RICHARD MARSH.

### Illustrated by Stanley Davis.

I WAS never more startled in my life. Before I write another word, I pause to consider if that statement is exaggerated. It is not. It expresses the exact fact. So I repeat it—I never was more startled in my life—and I never was!

I came up from Cambridge on the six-thirty—dressed for dinner. I hate travelling in evening dress, but there was no alternative. I had been playing in a hockey match against Somerville, and there was no other train. I was to dine with the Priors at eight-thirty; the train was not due in London until after eight; it was sure to take half an hour to get there from Liverpool Street, even in a taxi; unless I wished to be unpardonably late I had to be ready to sit down to table when I got to town. So I dressed before I started, and went up to town in a sky-blue ninon, mixed with goodness alone knows what—I am no better than a man at describing a frock!—which I hoped wasn't cut too low. They do put so little on you if you only give them a chance.

I was thinking hard when something happened which woke me up. What it had been I could not imagine. There was I, with my feet stretched out in front of me—I had kicked off my shoes because they were a weeny bit tight; there was the lamp overhead; and there was the empty compartment. Nothing in the least degree uncommon seemed to have occurred; yet I felt a most curious conviction that something had. I sat still, facing the engine, wondering and listening, when something caused me to look round at the door on my right—and, as I have written, I never was more startled in my life.

It was, of course, pitch-dark—like Erebus without; you could see absolutely nothing outside—but I saw something through the window on my right. I was not quite certain what it was, but it gave me the impression of being a face outside the window. Yet, since we were travelling at, I suppose, more than forty miles an hour, and there was nothing outside for anyone to stand on, how could it have been? I must have been mistaken—the victim of a momentary hallucination. And yet—I kept on looking—and it came again—the face outside the window.

I couldn't think what I ought to do. Ought I to pull the alarm and stop the train, or—what ought I to do?

I was still indeterminate when I saw a movement of the opposite door; it opened, and before I could say "Jack Robinson" someone got into my compartment.

I sat up with a jerk, got my feet—still shoeless—off the seat with another jerk, and was about to scream, when—well, I decided not to, at least, not for the moment.

The amazing visitor—that was what I called him to myself then and there—was a young man, little more than a child—he could not have been older than two-and-twenty—with quite the nicest face I have ever seen in the world. He wore no hat; his overcoat seemed to have been nearly torn off his back; how he had managed to keep himself from an awful death I could not conceive; yet when he came into the carriage he laughed as if in light-hearted enjoyment of an excellent joke. He put his hand up to his head—to find, apparently to his surprise, that nothing was there.

"Halloa!" he exclaimed. "Where's my hat? Anthony and Cleopatra! I must have lost it on the way. What I'm going to do without it I can't think!"

He spoke as if he still thought the thing was an excellent joke; but I was not going to encourage any nonsense of that kind.

"How dare you," I inquired, "come into my carriage like that? And who are you, anyhow? I insist on a satisfactory explanation."

"Naturally—so you would. But what would you call a satisfactory explanation? Can any explanation be satisfactory in a case of this kind? It was like this: there was the footboard outside, there was the door, and there was the handle—so I came in. I apologize for my intrusion, but I give you my word

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of honour that anything was better than remaining on that footboard. Halloa! what's that?"

Something had happened to the train—we were stopping. Again he laughed—what at I could not understand.

"That girl's done it!—she's stopped the train! Now we're in for it! What do you suppose I'd better do?"

"If that question is addressed to me——"

"You can take it from me it is, though I might be addressing myself. You see, it's like this. There were two female blokes in the carriage—I beg your pardon; there were two ladies in the carriage—I took them to be mother and daughter, though which was the elder of the two I couldn't help wondering. The mother was made up and looked ten years older than the daughter, who, I bet you half a crown, was thirty. It was the old girl who sounded the alarm—which, for the first time on record, seemed to alarm someone. They're stopping the train—there, it has stopped! How many seconds did they do it in? In a brace of shakes they'll be intruding on your privacy, looking for me. Shall you advise them—just think it over—shall you advise them to drag me to my doom, or will you allow me to linger on? I tell you what—I'll come to the other end of the carriage by you, farthest from the door by which I entered; I'll place myself on the seat and I'll go fast asleep. You've no idea how fast I can sleep! If they do succeed in waking me, they'll see at a glance that I must have been asleep for hours. Forgive me, but may I repose?"

That boy—he was nothing but a boy!—came down the centre of the carriage until he was right in front of me, and then he saw my blue satin shoes on the seat opposite.

"Goodness sakes alive!" he exclaimed. "What have we here from fairyland? They can't be shoes! Can the human foot be small enough—— Here, I say, they're coming! Don't you think you'd better try if you can get into them—or shall I?"

That extraordinary boy actually had my slippers in his impudent hand. I snatched them from him.

"How dare you touch my shoes?" I demanded.

"I daren't—that's the point. The supernatural always fills me with terror. There! what did I say? No human foot was ever small enough for them."

The impudence of the creature was so great that I had more than half a mind—but there really wasn't time for only half a mind. He had placed himself on the seat with his back propped up against the window; the train had stopped; there were voices without; people were evidently moving on the permanent-way. Someone was mounting the step of my compartment and opening the door through which he had come. Before I could get myself into a whole-minded state the door was opened wide and the guard of the train appeared. The moment he did so that young rascal gave a sort of gasp, as if he had been startled out of heavy sleep, sat up, and exclaimed:—

"Good heavens! what has happened?" He turned towards me. "I beg your pardon, my dear, but I'm afraid I've been to sleep." He glanced at his watch. "Why, I must have been asleep for hours. Before we started I told you I was dog-tired." He looked at the guard with an air of sublime surprise. "Halloa! who's this? Has anything happened? Where are we? Who are you, sir?"

The guard touched his cap.

"Sorry to disturb you, sir, but a lady in the next carriage but one says that there's a gentleman missing from her compartment."

"Missing from her compartment! What on earth does the woman mean? Or is it you, guard, who are playing a joke on us? You know I was asleep."

"Yes, sir, I saw that. The lady says she went to sleep—she and the young lady. When they woke up the gentleman wasn't there. They knew the train hadn't pulled up, so they stopped it to find out if he had thrown himself on the line."

"That's it, is it? All this fuss about nothing! Can't a chap throw himself out on the line without this bother?" The amazing visitor turned to me. "My dear, if you haven't got your shoes off! You'll get cold feet if you don't take care. Good night, guard; be careful to shut that door."

The guard went, the door shut, and the amazing visitor turned again to me. "If you'll forgive my saying so, I'm beginning to regard you as a trump. I said to myself when first I came into this carriage, 'Hang it! there's another of those confounded women!' But I saw in an instant that the word 'confounded' was out of place. I don't know what your sweet name is, but consider me henceforward at your dear unslippered feet for you to keep them warm on." The language he used was, like himself, astonishing. "What would have become of me if you had given the show away?"

"What's on your conscience?" I de-

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"THE YOUNG RASCAL GAVE A SORT OF GASP, AS IF HE HAD BEEN STARTLED OUT OF HEAVY SLEEP, AND SAT UP."

manded. He didn't look as if anything were on his conscience, but that was by the way. "Of what have you been guilty?"

"Guilty!" He threw out his hands in front of him and laughed. "Of what have I not been guilty? But I have a strong sense of propriety, and there are some things of which I cannot speak to a lovely stranger when I am alone with her. Hadn't I better help you on with your slippers? You're almost sure to get cold feet."

"When I want to wear my slippers I can put them on without your help."

"You're sure of that—perfectly, absolutely sure? Strictly between ourselves, it looks to me as if it might be a frightful struggle."

I wished that I had never taken off my slippers; but when he began to be rude I felt that all relations must cease between us.

"I do not wish," I told him, "to inquire into matters of which you are evidently ashamed, probably for sufficient reasons. I



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"'I'M AFRAID I'M A BIT LATE,' I TOLD HIM."

must ask you not to speak to me again until we reach London—or I will ring the bell."

"She will ring the bell! Ye whales and little fishes, if that doesn't cop the biscuit! Then, beautiful though adamantine maiden, since I cannot keep awake without speaking, I will resume my slumbers."

If he actually went to sleep I am not sure, but he seemed to; though I confess that I was in doubt as to whether anyone could go to sleep quite so easily as he did. He crossed his arms and closed his eyes, and remained so motionless that it was not easy to be sure that he even breathed. He really did behave rather well about my shoes. I got up and moved to the other end of the compartment and took my shoes with me—and there I put them on. It really was a bit of a tussle. I will make a confession—I doubt if any sleeping child ever looked handsomer than he did. He really was a perfect picture!

I am a bit of an artist. I took a pad out of my dressing-case—I always carry one—and I sketched him. I felt myself that it was quite well done, and an excellent likeness.

It was only when the train was slowing up at the platform in Liverpool Street Station that he showed signs of returning to life. He rubbed his eyes, and he yawned and looked hazily about him, and when he saw me he gave himself a little shake.

"I say!" he said. "Have I slept all the way to London? I must have been suffering from insomnia!"

I did not speak a word. A porter opened the carriage door and I got out—and that was the last I saw of him. I felt a little guilty as I walked along the platform, because, after all, he could scarcely be said to have done anything to annoy me—and I had been hard on him. I might at least have said "Good night."

Another taxi drew up at the Priors' just in front of mine. Directly after I arrived dinner was served. They placed me next to Oswald Prior.

"I'm afraid I'm a bit late," I told him. "I hope I haven't kept anybody waiting."

Oswald, unfolding his napkin, leaned towards me and dropped his voice.

"Strictly between ourselves, you are a little late, and if you hadn't come when you did dinner would have been served without you. You know the governor hates waiting."

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"I really am frightfully sorry; and to show my penitence, presently I'll tell you something thrilling. I've had a little adventure. By the way, how is Adelaide? She looks topping!"

The dinner was in honour of his sister's engagement. She had been at school with me, and I was to be one of her bridesmaids. She sat in front of me, all wreathed in smiles. Perhaps that was because she was sitting next to her young man — Harold Baxter. Oswald looked at me as though he were interested—possibly because I had spoken with a sort of thrill in my voice.

"You've had an adventure? Honest? Good egg! Tell me all about it when we've settled down to the soup."

Just as I was going to start to tell him someone began to talk on the other side of the table—a woman. She spoke a little loudly, as if she wished to be heard all over the room. If she did, her wish was certainly gratified. There were flowers in front of me; I had to peep round them to see who the speaker was. She was a big woman, gorgeously dressed, whose ambition it evidently was to look about half her age.

"Such an extraordinary thing happened in the train—to Ethel and me. I shouldn't have believed it if it hadn't happened to us—it was such an extraordinary thing."

"What was the extraordinary thing, Mrs. Philpotts?" asked Mr. Prior, from the end of the table.

"I feel so flustered that I hardly know how to tell you."

"It seemed so incredible!" struck in another voice, also a woman's.

"Yes," chimed in the first; "as Ethel says, it does seem to be so absolutely incredible—almost supernatural."

"Come, Mrs. Philpotts," repeated Mr. Prior, "tell us all about it. You're putting a strain on our curiosity."

Whereupon two voices—I learned that one belonged to the mother and the other to the daughter—began in a sort of chorus; and both the voices were so alike that it was not easy to tell one from the other.

"The mystery started at Cambridge—at least, it wasn't a mystery then—but it started at Cambridge."

This very luminous observation came from the mother. Then the daughter had her turn.

"No one got into the carriage when the train stopped at Cambridge, and we thought we were going to have it to ourselves. But just as we were starting someone got in."

"We had actually started, and I believe that a porter tried to prevent his getting in; it was positively dangerous—but it was no good. He got in—with a suit-case in his hand. The moment he was in he dropped the suit-case on to the floor. And he actually swore."

"The extraordinary part of it was that he was so good-looking."

"He was the most beautiful boy I ever saw!" The mother said this as if she defied contradiction. The daughter followed suit.

"He positively was. There's a picture in one of the Italian galleries which is exactly like him. I can't think what the picture is, but I know the face is beautiful."

"And yet, with a face like that, never apologizing for having used such dreadful words, what do you think he did say?"

Someone—I think it was old Prior—said he had not the least idea. None of us did have. The daughter went on:—

"You would never guess if you had five thousand tries—it was so incredible. He took off his hat, and with bare head he looked more like that Italian angel than ever—I believe the person in the picture was an angel—and he said—do you remember what he said, mother?"

"Shall I ever forget? He spoke with such a heavenly smile in such a gentle, sweet voice: 'Would you two ladies mind getting under the carriage seats for half an hour?'"

People laughed—which was not surprising. Someone asked:—

"Whatever did he mean by saying that? Was he mad?"

"You might think so, but he didn't seem to be; at least, there was nothing in his manner to show it. He spoke as quietly as I'm speaking now."

"A good deal more quietly, mother. I particularly noticed how softly he did speak. I thought that he was joking, but he didn't appear to be that, either. I looked at mother and mother looked at me; but we didn't know what to say or think. He said, as the train started and he sat down—another extraordinary remark—as if addressing no one in particular: 'It's surprising what a number of women there do seem to be in the world. You keep meeting them everywhere—even in trains.' Of course, it was a frightfully rude thing to say, but it didn't seem to be rude coming from him. We didn't know what to do. We sat there looking at each other—I had to smile—and not another word was spoken; and the odd part of it was that we went to sleep. I know I went to sleep, and mother says she did."

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"You see," said the other voice, speaking when the other apparently paused for breath, "we had been at Lady Piltdown's ball nearly all night, and we had been packing and travelling all day, and we simply couldn't keep our eyes open. We had been asleep when that young man got in at Cambridge, and, though he certainly was enough to wake anyone up, we were so ridiculously tired that, in spite of him, we were fast asleep again before we had gone very far."

"The next thing I remember," went on the daughter, "is that all of a sudden I was wide awake, conscious that something very strange had happened. And there had, with a vengeance! That young man had gone, the carriage was empty, the cushions were piled up anyhow, and the door at the other end was open and kept banging. I screamed."

"And I screamed"—this was the mother. "Was it strange after what had happened? Where had that young man gone—with the train travelling at sixty miles an hour?"

The lady was, perhaps, slightly overrating the speed of the train, but that did not matter.

"Shall I ever forget my horror when I realized that everything pointed to his having thrown himself out on the line?"

"'Oh, mother!' I cried. 'Can he have committed suicide—while we were asleep? Then he must have been a lunatic!'" This was the daughter.

"I felt that it did not necessarily follow that he was a lunatic; quite sane people do commit suicide. But I rang the alarm bell and stopped the train. The guard came to our compartment and wanted to know why the door was open, and if it was I who had sounded the alarm. I tried to explain to him, but it was not easy—I myself was in a state of fluster, and the guard was a stupid man."

"Mother said to the guard," added the daughter, "'A young gentleman has committed suicide. You will probably find his body on the line. I insist upon your finding it at once!' As if it had anything to do with the guard!"

"Did they find the body?" This inquiry came from some person unknown.

"They did not; not a trace of it—at least not then. But when we got to Liverpool Street Station the guard came up with a telegram. It said that just about where the train had been stopped they had found a felt hat and a gentleman's suit-case. The guard said—he really, mother, was rather an intelligent man—that that suggested that they would find his body also before very long. I expect you'll read about it in all the morning papers. I never had such a shock in my life! I haven't got over it now."

"My dear Ethel," continued her mother, "I probably shall not get over it for weeks to come. It was all so—so—so—I don't know how to describe it—but it was! That beautiful boy, bursting in on us like that——"

"Was he so very good-looking?" The inquiry came from Adelaide Prior.

"My dear Adelaide, I assure you I couldn't exaggerate that boy's good looks. I never, never shall forget his face. And then, while we sought from Nature some much-needed rest, he threw himself out on the line! What an awful fate for one so young! What can have driven him to do it? Can he have been guilty of a crime and goaded by despair?"

"I feel," said the daughter, "that if we had only kept awake it would never have happened. I certainly should never have allowed him to throw himself through the carriage door if I had been looking on. The whole thing has unnerved me. If it hadn't been that I was afraid of upsetting the table, I should have begged you, Mrs. Prior, to let me off."

They went on talking, and the other people kept chiming in, until a general conversation ensued and all sorts of suggestions were made and guesses hazarded, while I sat and wondered.

For some time I sat perfectly silent. Somehow I did not care to hint that I had had a finger in the mystery just where the mother and daughter had left it. It was their beautiful boy who had been my amazing visitor—that was entirely obvious. But what did his behaviour mean? The conclusion was forced upon me that he must have been insane. Surely no sane creature—however beautiful he was—would have behaved so madly. Why had he burst in upon that mother and daughter as he did? Why startle them with his insane suggestion that they—two ladies, complete strangers to him—should get under the seats? And why should they get under the seats, anyhow? Would a rational person have even remotely hinted at such a thing?

And then his conduct when he had been alone with me! Why had he risked his life to get from one compartment to the other? Had there been any purpose in his action, or was it the mere freakish frolic of a disordered mind? I listened, as I said, to the babel of talk—everyone seemed to have some more or less ridiculous explanation to offer—and I

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"FOR SOME TIME I SAT PERFECTLY SILENT."

wondered. What a hullabaloo would have arisen if I had added my quota to the mysterious story! More than once I was on the point of doing so, if only for the sake of enjoying the sensation which would inevitably follow, but—I refrained. What did it matter, after all, to anybody there? Suppose my amazing visitor had been guilty of some crime—I kept asking myself if he might not have been drinking—what useful purpose would be served by proclaiming the fact?

"What's the matter with your tongue?" asked Oswald Prior, commenting with the freedom of a life-long friend on my continued silence. "Aren't you interested in this wonderful mystery?"

I looked at Oswald—he was laughing. Apparently he had not taken the matter seriously. I had a notion that he regarded the whole story as an invention of the mother and daughter. I had an inclination to say a word or two which would at least show him that he was mistaken in doing that. Oswald Prior is quite a nice person to talk to, and I was beginning to feel that I should burst if I did not soon say something to somebody. But again the feeling came over me that I did not wish to give my amazing visitor away—even to Oswald. Once more I refrained.

Presently something happened which made me feel glad that I had.

The chatter about the "beautiful boy"

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was still in full swing. Some of the guests had had one or two glasses of wine; possibly that had caused their tongues to wag more freely. There really was a din in that dining-room, and the wonder was that they heard each other speak. Everybody seemed to be raining questions at the mother and daughter at once, and expecting answers before they had heard the questions. The hubbub was at its height when a servant slipped something into my neighbour's hand. Oswald, glancing at it, exclaimed:—

"Halloa! what's this? An express message? Who has sent me an express message?"

He tore open the envelope ther and there. I don't know how many words one is entitled to send in an express message; personally, I never sent one in my life. That message seemed to me to contain the makings of a long novel — and it really did. Many a novel has been founded on the basis of a slenderer plot.



"I HAD AN INCLINATION TO SAY A WORD OR TWO WHICH WOULD AT LEAST SHOW HIM THAT HE WAS MISTAKEN."

And the variety of emotions with which he seemed to read it! He started directly he had assimilated the first few words.

"What on earth—— Who the deuce——" He glanced at the signature at the end. "Why, it's from old C. V." He paused to explain under his breath to me. "This is from a chap who was to have dined here to-night; but he was later than you, because he never came at all. Cyril Vaughan is the bounder's name—everybody always calls him C. V. He is a card if ever there was one! He's going to be Harold Baxter's best man—that's why such a special point was made of his coming." I had not been aware until that moment that a special point had been made of his coming, or that there was such a person as Cyril Vaughan in existence—but that is by the way. "He was to have been introduced to Adelaide. She and Harold will be pretty wild at his not turning up. This seems to be a sort of explanation of why he didn't; though I may tell you, my dear Christabel"—I'm Christabel; Christabel Wilson—"entirely between ourselves, that I sometimes take C. V.'s explanations with a grain of salt. He appears to be in a hurry to make it, seeing he's sent it by express messenger. It seems to be a regular yarn. This is how he starts."

Oswald read the opening words of the message:—

"'Dear old Tiddle-de-hi-ti-hi!' That's what the ass calls me, and thinks it's funny. 'Top bricks aren't in it, or biscuits either; you can cop the lot, but you won't touch me!'" C. V. wrote in the vernacular—it is not my business to say what he meant. "'Honourable sir, it was it—just It! It will never be more It if I live to be ninety. A joy ride can't compare! Played a rotten game of footer. Started late and left off late.

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Found I'd got someone else's dress clothes in my suit-case. Started to hunt for mine. Found them in Peter Piper's rooms—the Lord knows how they got there! If ever I find myself alone with that man on the top of the Himalayas the world will be the richer by the loss of one. Hadn't time to change. Taxied down to the station—on one wheel. One or two coppers seemed to think we were going fast. Got to station just in time to see the train starting. It wasn't going to start without me, I'll give you my word—although a porter got himself almost thrown on the line. But, of course, in the economy of the universe porters don't count—*vide* Schlegel. Conceive my agony when I found myself in a compartment with two horrible women! My idea was to change on the road to town—the train is a non-stopper. How dare they permit women to get into a first-class carriage!

"'Talk about the improvement in the standard of manners! I could not—no, I could not!—change from one suit of clothes into another in the presence of two objectionable females—I know they were objectionable because I believe they were mother and daughter—and the obvious intention of them both was to conceal from the public eye which was the younger of the two. Miss was somewhere in the thirties and madam somewhere in the teens. If she had gone back much farther she would have been an infant in arms.'"

I glanced across the table—as well as I could because of the flowers—at the mother and daughter who had been telling the tale. The elderly lady was admittedly a masterpiece of make-up—what she was like when it all came off she alone knew; but I think C. V. exaggerated when he wrote of her ever becoming an infant in arms. Oswald, looking up from the message, which he had been whispering aloud, caught the direction of my eyes. His remark was a little cryptic.

"You don't think—not really? My word! Do you know, it might be. If it were! Christabel, my dear, I believe we're on the brink!"

He continued to read that message.

"Let's see what C. V. says next. Yes, here it is! You're not bored, are you?"

"Bored? The idea! I'm palpitating with excitement. Get on!"

"'Dear P., emotion overwhelmed me. I believe I suggested that those two wretched women should get under the seats. But what was the use of a suggestion to them? They sat and stared—oh, the stare of British females! If the old girl made-up to look about fourteen had opened her mouth much wider I am morally certain that a brand-new set of teeth would have dropped out. Oh, how I wish it had! I sat down, and I sat and I sat. I was bound to make an allusion to the monstrous regiment of women which holds the world in thraldom. It was no use—they sat and sat—and, do you know, before we had sat and sat much longer, all at once I became aware that they were asleep.

"'Think of that! They had actually fallen asleep under my very nose! Two mere women.

"'Wild notions came to me. If I could get hold of their coats I could rig up a sort of screen, divide the compartment into two, and change in my half. But first of all I had to get hold of the coats. They seemed to fit them like wax, so I did not see how it was going to be done. Then I thought of piling up the cushions into the semblance of a barricade and changing behind them. But there were no cushions—and, anyhow, they wouldn't pile.

"'I became desperate—time was flying. If I reached town without changing I should have to chuck dinner. I had promised darling Harold only yesterday that if the heavens fell I wouldn't do that. I had been given to understand that the beauteous Adelaide expected me.'

"That's true," observed Oswald; "she did. But when she reads the explanation—— I wonder how much of it is fiction?"

"Never mind about that now; finish the message. They'll be stopping you if you don't. Hurry!"

He hurried. "'In my desperation I was calmness itself. I crammed on my hat, reached down my suit-case, opened the carriage door, and stepped out into the night.'"

Oswald paused to comment, "Oh, I say, what a whopper!"

I knew better, but I held my peace. "We can talk about that sort of thing after you've finished. Do get on!"

"What does the purveyor of ripe fiction say? Oh, yes, here it is: 'I opened the carriage door and stepped out into the night.' He must have been dead if he did—yet he keeps on writing. I'll swear this is his fist. What next? 'I found myself on the footboard of the carriage. Did you ever find yourself on the footboard of a carriage when the train of which it forms part was tearing through the darkness? It was only when I found myself in that position that I realized that wisdom is not my strongest point. The

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confounded door wouldn't shut. In trying to shut it I almost tumbled off on to the line. The suit-case slipped from my hand—it was a marvel I didn't slip too. Off went my hat—but, my beloved, I held on. How I did it I shall never know, but I did—I am alive to prove it. Somehow I got along the footboard—I was moving backwards, so that the wind was behind me, or I should never have done it—till I reached the next compartment. It was a menagerie, sir, a menagerie! It seemed to me to contain fourteen or fifteen kids. I would never have got into that even if I had died, so I actually reached the next compartment but one, and I got into that. I had shut the door and was about to thank Providence, when—— !

"'My well-beloved, there was another woman in that! It seems past credence, but there was. The train seemed made up of women.

"'Of course, it didn't make any real difference, because, having lost my suit-case with my rags in it, I could not have put myself into my war-paint anyhow. But the shock of it—the shock! What had I done that I should be haunted by women? Is my life to be blasted by the female microbe?'"

"Your friend," I managed to slip in, "seems to think that men ought to have the world all to themselves. Have women ever done him any harm?"

Oswald's reply was horrid. "Of course, in a way, they do everybody harm. And, you see, he's rather a decent-looking chap."

Fancy speaking of my "amazing visitor"—the mother and daughter's "beautiful boy"—as decent-looking! Oswald went on:—

"'I made some piffling remark—I don't know what about; I was in such a state of mental collapse that I had to piffle. And



"'TO THINK,' HE CRIED, 'OF MEETING YOU AGAIN—SO SOON! I SEE YOU MANAGED TO GET YOUR SLIPPERS ON!'"

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would you believe it?—that woman fired up and took a shot at me. She actually wanted to know what I meant by getting into her carriage like that, and asked me for a satisfactory explanation. As if any explanation could have been satisfactory! Such is the unreasonableness of the inferior mind. I have an idea that I was struggling to explain—a man dies only at the last stitch—when the beastly train stopped dead. Of course, I knew what had happened. Down I plumped on the seat in front of her. A few absolutely unnecessary words were exchanged—and the guard came in. Of course, I got rid of the guard—trust me to do a little thing like that off my bat! The train re-started, and I was alone with the girl. I may mention that the woman was a girl.

"'Oswald Prior, I have never hidden from anyone what my attitude is towards women; therefore do not let your silly noddle jump to the conclusion that I am raving when I state, with entire calmness and nice appreciation of the meaning of words, that I am not at all sure that the woman, instead of being a girl, wasn't an angel.'"

At this point something happened to me—it was so sudden. I knew I turned a dreadful red, and when I do flush I flush all over. And remember, I was in evening dress. My impulse was to snatch the message from Oswald, stop his reading it, and finish it when I was all by myself. But Oswald would not let me. I thought his conduct most disagreeable. He stuck to the message like glue.

"The dear old boy's gone off his chump," was the remark he made. "Fancy C. V. talking about anyone in petticoats being an angel! Hopping about from one carriage to another must have turned his brain. Just listen to this!"

I had to listen, whether I liked it or not.

"'She was one of those rare beings who are too good for human nature's daily food.'" Oswald interjected a remark of his own. "He's got some quotation in his mind, hasn't he? He seems to me to have got it all wrong." Then he read on: "'Picture a being with red-gold hair—you know how I adore gold hair of just the right shade—hers was divine! And eyes!—shall I ever describe to you the effect that Being's eyes had on me?—eyes of blue, with lambent fires gleaming through the starry iridescence of pupils framed in glory.'" Oswald interposed with a very ribald observation. "Good Lord! did you ever hear such toshery? What's the matter with the man?" Then he glanced at me—and made a discovery. "I say, Chris, do you know you've got blue eyes? I never noticed it before." That man had been acquainted with me all his life and yet had not known what another had seen in less than half a second! "Do you think, if put to it, C. V. could be brought to write toshery of that sort about your eyes? They aren't bad ones! And, when I come to look at you, yours is a sort of a kind of a brick-coloured wig—now, what would you call red-gold?" Oswald returned to the message. "Let's see if the rotter has got any more of that sort of stuff to say—if so, I'll cut it."

Luckily, Mrs. Prior got up from her chair at that moment, so I was able to rise with the others. My tone was a little frosty.

"I won't trouble you to finish that special message now, Oswald; but if you'll let me have it I'll see what I can do when we get into the drawing-room; one is generally glad of something to read there. I think it's rather interesting."

But Oswald would not let me have the message; he said he would bring it with him when he came along. He favoured me with another sentence just as the women were about to go.

"Just listen to this—this is what the lad says next: 'Whether in this world we shall meet again I don't know; but in a sense we can never part—my Angel of the Slipperless Feet will be with me all the while.'"

Fancy calling me his "Angel of the Slipperless Feet"! Oswald might jeer—I own the thing was funny—but I never guessed that my amazing visitor had thought of me like that. What had he written about my eyes? Absurd, preposterous, nonsensical stuff—but fancy his having written it about me!

It was not very exciting in the drawing-room. It seldom is when the women are alone after dinner. Still, personally, I had so much to think of that that did not matter; to say nothing of Adelaide's regaling me with a long catalogue of Harold Baxter's perfections. To listen to her, he might have been something more than a man. I managed to ask if she had not been disappointed by one of her guests.

"You mean Cyril Vaughan, who was to have been Harold's best man."

"Was to have been? Isn't he going to be?"

"Well, my dear, Harold's so annoyed with him. Fancy his never turning up after he had promised he would—and not sending a word to excuse himself! Harold says that's him all over. Nowadays young men are simply unbearable. Harold says that he



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wouldn't wonder if after all Mr. Vaughan hadn't forgotten all about his promise. If he has, Harold declares that he will never speak to him again."

Even as she spoke I heard a servant's voice announce a visitor's name—more audibly than those things are sometimes done :—

"Mr. Cyril Vaughan!"

I heard the announcement quite clearly. It so startled me that I nearly jumped up from my chair.

"Who is that come?" inquired Adelaide. She had clearly not heard as plainly as I did. "What did Parkins say?"

"It sounded like 'Mr. Cyril Vaughan.'"

I was in such a stupid fluster that if Adelaide had been thinking of anything but herself she must have noticed it.

"Mr. Cyril Vaughan!" Something shocking might have occurred, to judge by Adelaide's manner. "You don't mean to say he has arrived! Fancy his arriving at this hour—for dinner! In the circumstances he must have courage to come at all. He'll have to have a good explanation to offer, or I'm sure Harold won't like it. I suppose I'd better go and speak to him. Is that the man?"

The individual to whom Adelaide was referring emphatically was the man. I must admit to a very curious state of mind, because the mere sight of him seemed to send the blood to my head. I knew I was flushed all over—it was so extremely ridiculous—especially as I pride myself on keeping cool. As he stood in the centre of the room talking to Mrs. Prior all the women stared. In his dress clothes he was more the "beautiful boy" than ever. Suddenly there was a little scene. Mrs. Philpotts, rising from her chair, delivered herself of a statement which surprised the company.

"Why," she exclaimed, "it's the young gentleman who committed suicide!"

Her daughter said: "It's the face of the picture!"

Although they spoke loudly enough, they seemed to be unheeded by Mr. Vaughan. Something caused him to glance past his hostess towards me—perhaps it was the fact that Adelaide was moving towards him in order to associate herself with her mother's greeting. Although Adelaide was within three or four feet of him, she also went unheeded. Seeming to be entirely oblivious of her presence, striding straight past her, he advanced towards me.

"To think," he cried, "of meeting you again—so soon! I see you managed to get your slippers on!"

The young man certainly spoke with unnecessary loudness. The others might not have known what he meant, but I did. I was told afterwards that I turned absolutely pink. Then the men came in from the dining-room; Oswald Prior, entering by a different door, passed straight to me. He was apparently as oblivious of Mr. Vaughan's presence as Mr. Vaughan had been of that of others. Oswald held out to me the "message."

"I say, what do you think? Old man Vaughan says—in a postscript—that he may come on later. We'll roast him if he does. You read his precious message to its drivelling end. Anything like the farrago of rot he writes of that girl he met in the train——"

I could not let him continue to the bitter end. Something seemed to have obscured his sight—I had to pull him up. Goodness knows what might have been trembling on the tip of his tongue.

"Oswald," I said, "don't you see Mr. Vaughan?"

Oswald turned with surprising suddenness, as if he were an automaton worked by a spring.

"Cyril!" he exclaimed. "Good Lord Almighty! where on earth have you dropped from? Why, I thought you were the other side of nowhere!"

"So I was. I've come from nowhere into Paradise."

It was rather a crude thing to say—to say nothing of exaggeration; but Cyril Vaughan has a crude way of saying exaggerated things whenever the spirit moves him. Oswald stared at us as if he could not make the position out.

"You know each other?" he asked.

"I do know this lady very well," declared that shameless youth, "though I have not the honour of knowing her name."

"Don't know her name?" cried Oswald. "Why, this is Miss Christabel Wilson."

My amazing visitor looked me in the eyes—and he laughed.

"Allow me, Miss Christabel Wilson, to express the pleasure I have in meeting you again. May I be permitted to take you by the hand?"

I let him take my hand—before the crowded room—although he was so silly.

Presently, for the public satisfaction, I had to explain. The second version of the story, when my amazing visitor and I told it between us, created a greater sensation than the first had done. The mother and daughter were eclipsed.

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# THE RECORD LION STORY.

## How I Killed Four Charging Lions in One Battle.


### By STEWART EDWARD WHITE.

### Illustrated by Warwick Reynolds.


Mr. Stewart Edward White, one of the foremost of America's school of "open-air" novelists, has during the last few years won a wide popularity in this country with his novels, "The Blazed Trail," "Gold," and other stories of pioneer life in the States. He is well known, too, as a hunter of big game, and his two volumes describing his shooting expeditions in Africa—"The Land of Footprints" and "African Camp Fires"—are written in the racy, vivid style with which the following thrilling experience is told. Not long ago, ex-President Roosevelt paid Mr. White the tribute of saying that he was one of the finest shots he had ever encountered in all his African hunting trips.

SOONER or later any man with a little experience in Africa is sure to be asked as to what he considers the most dangerous of the big game. The answers vary so that no generalization can be made from them. But it is always interesting to get the individual point of view, so I will give mine.

Judged merely by results, the lion would seem to stand easily at the head of the list. His record of men killed and men mauled is as long as that of all the others put together. This may be partly due to the fact that more inexperienced men hunt lions. Elephant-shooting is done mostly by professional ivory-hunters; and when an amateur goes after old *tembo* it is generally under guidance of a seasoned hunter. On the other hand, anybody who has fired ten consecutive shots in a shooting gallery feels competent to try for lions. But, to give just weight to both sides, probably more elephants than lions have been killed in the last fifty years. To my mind it would be exceedingly difficult to strike a fair balance between these two; and therefore I should be inclined to put them on a parity for first place. The man who kills his lion or his elephant, *in fair chase*, and without too much bull luck, has been in considerable danger.

Second place goes to the leopard. If he had more weight and strength he would be easily first. He is quick, aggressive, hard to hit, tenacious of purpose, and very fierce. Only the fact that he is strictly nocturnal and very rarely seen has kept down the list of his casualties.

The buffalo gets third. In some parts of the open country he may be hunted with very slight risk. But generally he must be followed into thick cover. There he must be closely approached before he can be seen. The danger before the shot is not so much that he will deliberately charge as that he and his numerous friends of both sexes will run over you in their blind rushes to and fro. After being hit he becomes very fierce, and is quite capable of ambushing the hunter who is following on his trail. A very respectable number of white men are annually blotted out by this beast.

The rhinoceros, to my notion, is a bad fourth. He is stupid, cannot see well, and, common belief to the contrary notwithstanding, is of a sufficiently peaceable disposition. His size is formidable, and he easily becomes flustered over any scent or sound he does not understand. Then he rushes to and fro in violent hysterics, trying to determine the best way to escape. He snorts and crashes and raises a dust; and when his dim sight finally discerns the cause of the trouble, he is generally so close that he is likely to attack out of sheer desperate panic. The remedy is to keep out of his range of vision. It is ridiculously easy to do. Out of the hundreds

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of "rhinoceros charges" reported by the breathless amateur sportsman, very, very few—perhaps one per cent.—would bear analysis. Men who know their business are exceedingly slow to admit that the rhinoceros often charges. Nevertheless, in thick cover, and in exceptional circumstances, the rhinoceros is not only a terrifying but a really dangerous animal, and deserves his position in the ranks of dangerous big game. But he does make a rather bad fourth.

Perhaps a "score" might be interesting. Within the news radius of Nairobi in fourteen months lions killed eight men, mauled four; elephants killed two, mauled one; buffalo killed two; rhinoceros killed two.

The next question asked of the returned African hunter is as to what he considers his most "thrilling experience." Until the latter part of my last trip I always had great difficulty in answering that question. The "thrilling" quality of an experience depends somewhat on the state of the nerves at the time. Comparisons are difficult. If the inquirer was satisfied to know when I was the most scared, I could tell him easily enough; but that definition hardly seemed to fill the bill. In September of last year (1913), however, I had an adventure that went so far beyond all the rest that it easily represents the top notch of my sportsman's career.

Cuninghame and I had travelled for nearly three months in virgin game fields, and had at last come into touch with the savage tribes living near Victoria Nyanza. The corollary to meeting savage tribes anywhere was, as always, the acquisition of a lot of information. Buffalo rumours, elephant rumours, route rumours, Uganda cob rumours, all poured in upon us. Most of them we knew to be false or exaggerated; but some of them might be true. The only way to discover which was what was to investigate personally. Therefore we agreed to separate for three weeks. Cuninghame, with ten men, was to push due west in order to sift certain statements as to elephants and buffalo; while I, with the rest of the force, should first scout southward as far as I could comfortably reach, and then should extend my investigations due north with an eye for alleged Uganda cob. We agreed to meet at a reputed ford on the Mara River. Parenthetically, the elephants and buffalo were exaggerated, there were no Uganda cob, and the ford of the Mara was a myth; but that is typical of Africa.

Cuninghame and I said good-bye to each other at the head village of a Sultan named Myeru. Fifteen or twenty of Myeru's savages accompanied me to carry in a gift of promised meat. The head-man of them, a wonderfully impressive person with great natural dignity, came to my side.

"The Sultan Myeru says you are to shoot for him three topi, two wildebeeste, and a zebra," he announced.

"The deuce he does!" said I, in English. The Sultan Myeru was important to us, but it would never do to take orders. I had intended to bestow the regal gift of two wildebeeste, because wildebeeste tails are greatly prized, but now I revised my intention.

"The Sultan Myeru will take what I give him," I answered the head-man.

Our route lay along the base of a rocky range of hills. Another similar range paralleled us seven or eight miles away. Between was a rolling valley grown thickly with trees. Soon below us I saw a herd of eight topi. Motioning everyone to stop, I crept forward to within range and dropped one in his tracks. The herd scampered away; but one stopped for an instant, and him too I downed. The savages swept down in a shrieking mob.

"There," said I to the head-man, "is my gift to the Sultan Myeru. That is all the meat I will shoot. *Bass!*"

The head-man bowed, making no reply. We marched on. After a little the head-man and about half the savages rejoined us. They still had hopes of more bounty.

In an hour we had reached the end of the hills. From our elevation we looked abroad over a wide, undulating, bush-grown plain, rising to a distant height of land. In the bush were three grass patches, like emeralds in a setting, miniature prairies, perhaps four or five miles in diameter. On them my glasses showed large herds of game, so we descended the long, gentle slope of the hills in their direction.

Soon we began to run across herds of wildebeeste. The head-man moved up to my elbow. With painstaking care he pointed out to me each perfectly obvious herd. I remained impervious to hints. About noon he sighed deeply, salaamed, and sadly departed for the Sultan Myeru's village, followed by his henchmen.

The growth surrounding the round grass plains proved to be scattered small trees with white trunks, like poplars or birches. Below them the grass grew short and green, like a lawn; and over the grass were scattered white and pink flowers. We wanted to camp near the plain in order to examine the game thereon. Fortunately a short search brought

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us to a water-hole. We pitched camp beneath the shadiest of the little trees.

That evening the lions began roaring very soon after dark. They were somewhere to the westward and a considerable distance away; but their reverberating calls carried distinctly to us. There were a number of them, and they were doing what I used to call "curate-response" roaring. That is to say, one would begin just before his predecessor left off; so that a continuous pulsating volume of sound rolled across the night. It was a good deal like a long freight train crossing a peculiarly resonant bridge, or the droning of a distant twelve-inch shell.

From the first heavy sleep that falls on the tired tropical *voyageur*—when sleep visits him at all!—I was aroused by a burst of noise. Raising myself on my elbow I found that the beasts were much nearer—say at the top of the low ridge a mile away. They were monopolizing the whole world of sound. Even the insects seemed to have fallen into the dead silence that prudence or terror had imposed on the rest of the veldt. I tried to make out how many of the lions there were, but was unable to distinguish clearly; I thought there were three. Then, in spite of myself, I fell into a doze. The magnificent organ tones persisted in my consciousness; became fantastic; mingled with dreams; faded into distant thunder.

I was jerked back from sleep by a roar that seemed to shake the tent. The men were chattering together in subdued tones; and I could see against my canvas the flickering of replenished little fires before the men's tents. This one mighty roar had for the moment terminated the concert. A dead blank silence had fallen on the world. Leaning on my elbow, I listened intently. I could for a moment hear nothing. Then came the sound of a steady *lap, lap, lap* of a beast drinking. They were actually watering at our little water-hole just outside the camp lines!

There was nothing to be done, and no particular danger. The situation was interesting, that was all. In about ten minutes the lions withdrew. I fell asleep again; but through my dreams I could hear them occasionally, voicing their satisfaction—or dissatisfaction—as they slowly retired. Never before had I heard lions roar so persistently.

Next morning, eating my breakfast as usual before daylight, I talked it over with Memba Sasa. We agreed it was about time to go lion-hunting. Memba Sasa thought there were four of them. Subsequent events proved him correct.

We took with us every man in camp, with the exception of the cook and Ali, just in case we might have to beat cover. The game had drawn close about us in the night. Within the first two hundred yards I counted twenty-six topi and wildebeeste. For three hours we ranged and quartered the undulating hills. There was plenty of several sorts of game, but no lions.

"Memba Sasa," said I, "if we find lions here it is just luck. There are very many water-holes and very many pieces of cover. Lions could drink anywhere and lie down anywhere; and unless we had great luck we would not run across them."

While I was saying these words, a lioness thrust her head up from a clump of small bush twenty yards ahead of us. Some of the porters saw her first, and raised a great fuss. I had the ·405 Winchester in my hand, and immediately took a shot at the middle of her chest. She flipped backward off the ant-heap on the top of which she had been lying. A flying shot missed her as she fell. She whirled back from the edge of the thicket and charged at me snarling with rage, but before she had hit her stride three rapidly-delivered shots stopped her.

Almost at the same instant a male lion emerged from the other side of the thicket and trotted slowly away. Evidently he had not seen us, but the noise and row had disturbed his siesta, and he was going to a more peaceful locality. We thought we caught a glimpse of a lioness just ahead of him, but could not be sure.

We trotted along after, trying to strike a happy medium in speed that would take us near enough to catch the beast's attention and still leave me wind enough to shoot straight. I had exchanged the ·405 for the Springfield, for I expected the first shots would be at fairly long range. Inside a few hundred yards the thin bush ceased. We emerged on a tiny open plain, grown sparsely with sapling-sized trees, on the other side of which were more thickets, perhaps a quarter of a mile away. Here the lion caught sight of us and stopped abruptly. The lioness, too, came to a halt, and turned sideways the better to inspect us. They were then about a hundred and fifty yards distant.

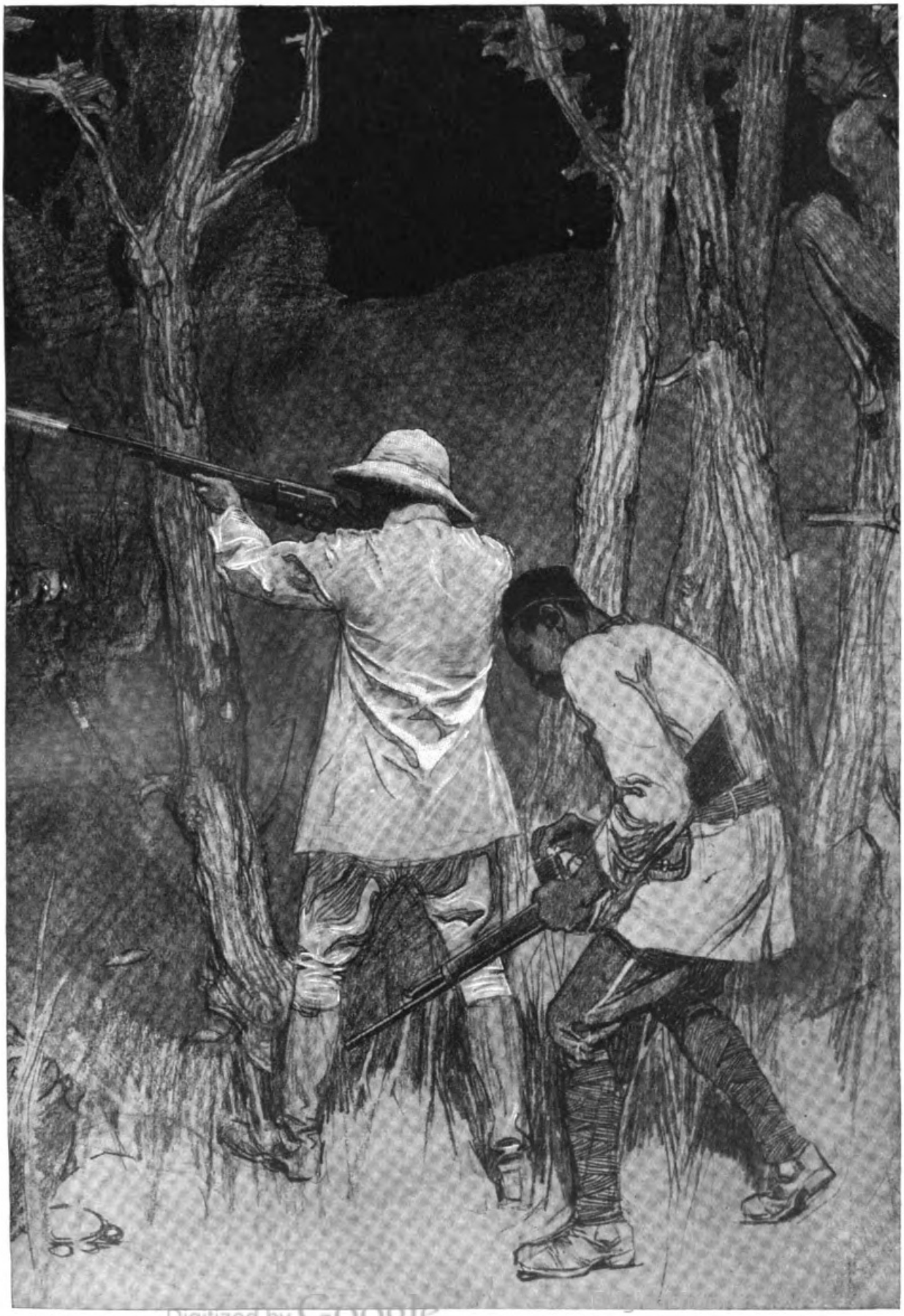
We stopped near one of the small saplings. Memba Sasa moved up next my left elbow. At what stage of the game the rest of the men took to the trees I do not know. Pretty promptly, I should think. At any rate, those trees fairly rained niggers after the row was over.

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"IT WAS A GOOD DEAL LIKE PUSHING EAGER PUPPIES BACK INTO A KENNEL YARD—

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FIRST ONE, THEN ANOTHER, THEN ANOTHER, THEN THE FIRST ONE BACK AT YOU AGAIN."

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I waited a few moments to steady down after our short run. The two beasts held their positions, side on, staring back at us. When my heart had stopped thumping I took as close a shot as I could at the lion, and hit him very near the middle of the shoulder. With a snarling growl he leaped straight up in the air, then turned to bite savagely at the wound. The lioness did not stir.

My attention concentrated on the wounded beast, I threw to and fro the bolt of my weapon in order to get in another shot before he came to himself. I was on the point of taking aim when Memba Sasa touched my elbow.

"*Angalia, bwana, simba m'kubwa sana!*" (Look, master, see the very big one!) he breathed.

I looked. From behind the screen of thin bush to the left sauntered the most magnificent wild lion I had ever seen. His yellow mane hung thick and long half-way to his knees, and extended far along his back. His head was up, and his sleepy, wise face expressed dignified surprise.

It is well known to African hunters that wild lions rarely carry heavy manes. A good proportion of the adult males are of the maneless variety, while those that have manes lose a great deal of them in thorns and in the bush. No wild lion ever quite equals in this respect the pampered and sheltered menagerie specimens, any more than the latter can compete with their wild kindred in size. At this time I had killed and helped to kill seventeen lions. Of that lot seven were males; of the males two were maneless, and of the other five only one had a fairly decent mane, and one what might be called a really good mane. But none equalled the lordly old chap who stood before me. It was very bad sense to "take on" one lion before settling with the other, but the temptation was too great. I put a Springfield bullet in his shoulder, too.

At the report of the rifle the lioness charged like a flash. Nobody had said or done a thing to her. She just wanted to prove that line about the "female of the species," I suppose. At any rate, she came, and she came humming.

Already I had two wounded lions on hand, but evidently it was necessary to acquire another. My bullet checked her nearly short up, from the mere shock of impact. Out of the corner of my eye I had seen the first lion, recovered from his cat-fit over being hit, swing into his stride when the lioness started. Memba Sasa was snuggled up to my elbow, chanting low-voiced a sort of war-song of his own. With my left hand I snatched from him the ·405, at the same time passing the Springfield behind my back. He seized it in almost the same motion with which he handed up the other gun. Good old Memba Sasa! Here as always he played the game.

When I got back to camp an hour or so later, I tried to put down in my notebook exactly the sequence of events. I put down something, but subsequent recollections that float across my mind, fragmentary but very vivid, make me doubt whether I can reproduce in my own mind an accurate sequence. Therefore I will not try to tell you in what order I shot at those lions, or where each several shot hit. I do know that I shot at each of them in turn as it seemed necessary to keep them checked. It was a good deal like pushing eager puppies back into a kennel yard—first one, then another, then another, then the first one back at you again. A later count of cartridges expended showed that from the two rifles I fired eighteen shots. Five of these were expended on the first lioness, and four on the big one after the main battle was over. So I must have used nine cartridges to stop the charge. Of these I missed one.

It was absolutely necessary to keep cool, and I was scared enough to do so, for I realized that if for a minute fraction of an instant I allowed myself to lose my grip I should be stampeded. After all, in a really hot corner, where a man is in a certain danger of his life, he is too busy to analyse. And it is the man who analyses who gets rattled. I wish I could, without invention or exaggeration, tell you more of my state of mind, for in such unusual circumstances such things are always interesting, but I cannot.

At any rate, we shot nine times, we shot pretty fast, and we shot accurately. That is solely because we had to. I used the two rifles alternately, for I had some sort of a notion of keeping both magazines full. Memba Sasa went on crooning his war-song and loading like a machine. The second lion collapsed early in the game and about a hundred yards away. The lioness came close in, but was crippled for good at about fifteen yards. The big lion had stopped sixty yards distant, and was sitting on his haunches staring about him. He had been badly hit, but was in no immediate distress. I have a notion that he had not yet located us behind our little sapling, but had charged with his two companions, following their lead.

Now I am perfectly aware that a wounded lion always charges. Exceptions are so rare

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as only to prove the rule. But I have always cherished a theory that even a wounded lion can be bluffed out, provided the man does the charging first, before the beast can gather his faculties. Here was a Heaven-given opportunity to try that out.

So I took the ·405, stepped out from our sapling, and began to walk steadily towards him.

If I had stood still in his sight for the instant necessary for him to see what I was, he would have come in, for he was hurt and angry. But he had not that instant. Holding my rifle ready for immediate action, I advanced on him at an even gait. He saw me at once, and fixed on me his great yellow eyes.

He sat thus absolutely still while I covered about half the distance between us. In my mind I had fixed upon a certain little bush twenty yards or so from the lion as the point at which I should begin to shoot. When I still had half-a-dozen yards to go the intentness of his gaze broke. He began to act exactly as a dog does when he is embarrassed, glancing down, now to right, now to left. At twenty-five yards the pressure became too great. He suddenly turned and bolted! And I missed a hasty shot at him as he ran.

Mind you, his nerve was not broken, for within a hundred yards or so he rounded to in a small clump of brush, whence he charged desperately. Only, as I say, the pressure was too steady and too persistent for so nervously organized an animal to endure.

We had no difficulty in locating the spot at which he had stopped. He was growling nastily in his throat—loudly, in crescendo, on the intake of the breath; slowly, with a sort of gurgling undertone, as he exhaled. The leaves concealed him. We walked forward to within thirty or forty yards, then began to edge to right and left a few inches at a time, trying to get a sight of him.

It was very nervous work. We dared not get off balance for a single instant. How long exactly this lasted I do not know. The beast was lashing himself up, and his growling and snarling were working up to the point of explosion. Suddenly, so suddenly that for a fleeting instant I was almost paralyzed by the surprise of it, he broke from the cover and launched himself at us.

This is, in my opinion, the supreme moment in a hunter's life; the moment when, all preliminaries at an end, the lion makes his direct and deadly attack. The little unessentials are brushed aside. Only remains the big, primitive idea to fill all a man's mind—kill or be killed. The preliminary manœuvrings have made him nervous and jumpy enough to scream aloud; but now all his faculties fall into battle array. He becomes deadly cool. Each of the few movements necessary to bring his weapon into play he executes with what seems to him an almost deliberate precision. A smouldering, repressed emotion fills all his being; it is not exactly anger, but something like it—rather a feeling of antagonism, a pitting of forces and skills. He delivers each shot with an impact of nervous force behind it, as though he were to strike with his hands. "Take *that!* take *that!* take *that!*" his mind seems to itself to mutter, though, of course, he has really no time or attention to waste on articulation. And beneath all is a great wary alertness, that sits like a captain in a conning-tower, spying cannily over all the situation as it develops, poised ready to plan competently for the unexpected. Excited in the usual sense of the word? No. But alive to the uttermost of all his faculties at once, yes. That is why the moment is supreme.



THE LAST LION OF THE FOUR.

I killed that lion with three shots, the last delivered at eight paces. He was considerably slowed by his previous wounds, but he made a gallant fight. Each blow stopped him short; but he gathered himself and came on. He rolled over at last, stone-dead.

That, I think, is my "most thrilling experience." It is improbable that any man, without backing, ever before killed four lions in one battle, *all of which charged.*



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# Parted Ways

By P. G. Wodehouse

*Illustrated by Alfred Leete*

George Marlowe belonged to the new school of writers, who write because they have the knack of writing, and because it is an easy way of making enough money to enable them to do the things they want to do. He cultivated no pose; he had no message; he simply wrote. Without exerting himself unduly he could earn more than enough to keep himself in comfort; and now that all these moving-picture companies were buying up the film rights of stories quicker than you could turn them out, the thing was a walk-over.

That was George on Literature. What he really lived for was golf.

It was her supreme plus-twofulness which had first appealed to him in Grace Pemberton. She was a magnificent golfer. She had been in the first six in last year's Ladies' Open Competition. She drove divinely, putted to perfection, and to watch her getting out of casual water was like looking at some beautiful picture by a great master. And she did not write. George was stunned by the thought that to him alone of men it had been vouchsafed to win the love of the ideal woman.

He looked down the vista of the years, and told himself that all was well. Trouble might come—no one realized more clearly than he his fatal tendency to slice his approach shots—but she would be near him in the hour of trial, urging him on. They would journey through life together, the perfect companions. As a bachelor, his putting had been execrable. Who could say what feats he might not perform on the green, helped by her sympathy and encouragement? And there was such perfect trust between them that they could venture to speak freely of each other's faults. If his stance was wrong, she would not hesitate to tell him so for fear of hurting his feelings. He, on his side, could criticize her only blemish—a tendency to overdo the use of the niblick. It is on this frankness, this absence of subterfuge, that wedded happiness can alone be based.

Soul-mates—that was the word he was

WHEN George Marlowe had been engaged to Grace Pemberton a little more than a week he asked her a question. It was a question which he had been trying to ask ever since the day when she had promised to be his wife. A hundred times it had risen to his lips, and every time he had swallowed it with a jerk. He was afraid. Her answer meant so much to him.

"Dearest," he said, "have you ever written a story?"

"A story?"

"A magazine story, or a novel, or anything like that?"

"No."

"Never?"

"Never."

"And you don't feel you want to?"

"Not in the least."

George took her in his arms and kissed her in a kind of awed way. He could scarcely believe his good fortune. He was an author himself by profession, and in the circles in which he had moved all the women wrote profusely. It was his misfortune to dislike women writers. Everyone has some pet aversion—some dislike slugs, some cockroaches; George disliked women writers.

He had been quite prepared to hear that Grace wrote. Every day he had been bracing himself for the sudden production of a manuscript fastened together in the top left-hand corner with pink silk; and now, from her own lips, he had learned that his fears had been groundless.

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"IT WAS HER SUPREME PLUS-TWOFULNESS WHICH HAD FIRST APPEALED TO HIM IN GRACE PEMBERTON. SHE WAS A MAGNIFICENT GOLFER."

trying to think of. He and she were soul-mates.

Life was very perfect during the first months after the wedding. They settled down to an ideal routine. In the morning George would go to his study, look at his typewriter, and decide to do no work till after lunch. After lunch and a leisurely pipe, off to the study once more, look at the typewriter, and decide to do no work till after dinner. After dinner there was no time for work, because the details of the day's play had to be gone carefully over.

These golden epochs in our lives do not last. The world is too much with us. Serpents wriggle into our Edens. The one that wriggled into George's was named Henderson Banks. He was George's literary agent.

For some time this man had been making himself a perfect nuisance. Letters arrived from him almost daily, couched in a strain of unmanly querulousness. George, it seemed, had contracted to deliver a serial story by a certain date, and that date had come and passed. The editor was calling Mr. Banks up on the telephone every half-hour. Mr. Banks's reputation was at stake. These and similar trivialities were the burden of the agent's correspondence. It annoyed George, who was coming on rapidly with his putting and wished to concentrate undisturbed.

He made the serious mistake of introducing this man into his home. At the moment it seemed the only course. He could not find the time to answer all those letters, and he absolutely refused to go to London; so the only thing to do was to ask Mr. Banks down for the night. He arrived; and, as he came in at the door, peace flew out of the window.

Henderson Banks talked about writers and editors and publishers and prices per thousand words from the moment he arrived till the

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moment he left. It was his curious habit, when in conversation with one of his troupe of trained authors, to relate in detail all the big things he had done for all the rest of the troupe, together with full scenarii of all the plots of all their recent stories. He never listened to his victim's remarks, and he never stopped for breath. He was one of Nature's monologists.

George was used to him, and had developed the faculty of ignoring the flow of information and thinking of other things. All the while that Henderson Banks was telling how he had fixed up Jones solid for three years with Blank's Magazine and running over the main points of Jones's forthcoming novel and going through all the plots of the twelve short stories which he had sold for Smith to the *Asterisk*, George was on the links, holing out in one under bogey. He was subconsciously aware that Henderson Banks was still in his midst, but that was all.



"HENDERSON BANKS TALKED FROM THE MOMENT HE ARRIVED TILL THE MOMENT HE LEFT."

It was far different with Grace. This was the first time that she had ever heard the business of writing described intimately and at length. George never spoke of his work, and never seemed to do any. His attitude towards his profession was too off-hand to be inspiring. But Mr. Banks made it all seem so exciting. It was a delightful game, with the additional inducement of enormous prizes. Moreover, he made the thing appear so easy. Mr. Banks was an enthusiast, and it was no doubt unintentionally that he gave people the impression that the only thing you had to do to become a successful writer was to employ him as an agent.

Towards the end of his monologue he mentioned a name that drew an exclamation from Grace.

"Maud Blenkinsop! Does *she* write?"

"Write! She's a genius." All Mr. Banks's clients were geniuses. "I've sold a series for her to——"

"Why, I was at school with her," said Grace. "Nobody thought she was clever there."

"I've got contracts for her whole output for the next two years at eight guineas a thousand words. But listen, I want to tell you the idea of this series. It's wonderful!"

Grace was not listening. Her mind, like George's, was far away. But while George had plunged into the future, she was roaming in the past. She was back at school, examining Miss Blenkinsop with a critical eye, and deciding that there was absolutely nothing in her mental equipment that marked her off from the rest of her peers. Yet here she was, an established writer. If Maud Blenkinsop—handicapped, now that she came to think of it, by red hair and a bad complexion—could do it, why could not——? She was absent-minded during the rest of dinner, and George, that night, when he spoke of James Braid's lofting work, thought her manner strange.

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"It's a ghastly nuisance," said George next day, "but I really shall have to start in again on that serial this morning. It seems to be rather pressing. Why don't you have a round with the pro.?"

"I don't think I will. I think I'll stay indoors."

George was touched. That his absence should actually make golf distasteful to her was a striking tribute.

"I sha'n't take very many days over the thing," he said. "I've got about half of it done, and the rest will be easy."

"I shouldn't hurry it, dear. Make it as good as you can. I sha'n't be dull. I can find lots of things to do."

George kissed her fondly.

And what did she do? She sneaked off to her room, sat down at the little near-Chippendale table, ate five chocolate creams, and began to write a novel.

In the old Greek tragedies it was a recognized rule that any episode likely to excite the pity and terror of the audience to too great an extent must be enacted behind the scenes. Following this admirable plan, I shall not dwell upon the spectacle of that so-soon-to-be-divided home. The thing is too poignant. I shall not describe the feverish energy with which George, hammering his typewriter, peeled off the chapters of the noxious chunk of wholesome magazine fiction which stood between him and the links. I could mention—but will not—how at intervals he sprang from his chair, seized a walking-stick, and executed a Vardon shot at an invisible ball; and then, remembering that every moment he wasted meant one more moment of dull inaction for Grace, leaped back into his seat and got home on the key-board with a Gunboat Smith overhand swing which had the machine clinching and covering up in an instant. While, all the time, Grace, whom he imagined looking wistfully out of the window in the direction of the links, counting the minutes, was scratching away at her novel with a vim which made the undersized table vibrate like the A deck of the *Lusitania*.

These things are too strong meat for a gentle-souled public, so I omit them and skip to the moment when George, having brought his heroine and hero together with a click, leaped from his chair without even waiting to type "The End" with a couple of lines underneath it, and, snatching up his clubs, rushed from the room, yelling for Grace.

Grace, at that moment, had just taken a fresh sheet of paper and written on it the words, "Chap. XXIV."

His clamour drew her from her work. She came downstairs. Her hair was rumpled, and her eyes had that far-away look.

"I've finished," said George. "Grab your clubs, and let us get there in two jumps."

"Clubs?"

Her voice was the voice of one slowly awaking from sleep. George felt a little chilled. He had anticipated the bright smile, the sparkling eye, possibly the joyful whoop.

"The idea," he explained, gently, "was to get swiftly on to the first tee and push the ball into the next county."

"Oh, do you want to play golf?"

George looked at her anxiously.

"Aren't you feeling well, dear?"

Grace seemed to pull herself together with an effort.

"I had no idea you would have finished so soon."

"I hurried the thing up. My hero and heroine were good for another twenty thousand words of misunderstanding, but I got them by the scruffs of their necks and made a whirlwind finish. I doubt if there has ever been a more surprised couple than they were when they found themselves suddenly showering kisses on each other in the moonlight."

"George."

There was a pause. Then Grace giggled. One would like to say that she gave a light laugh; but it was not a light laugh, it was a giggle—a furtive, sinister, shamefaced giggle, a giggle which froze George's corpuscles with a nameless fear. He stared at her, and she giggled again.

"George, I want to tell you something. I know it sounds absurd, but I—I——"

"Yes? Yes?"

"I—I've been writing a novel, too."

Strictly speaking, one ought to omit this scene as well. It is too painful. It takes hold of the sensibilities of the reader and ties them into knots. But there is not much more of it. Wince, but struggle on.

"You've been writing a novel!" said George, dully.

"I've just got to Chapter Twenty-Four."

"You've just got to Chapter Twenty-Four!"

"So I can't play golf this morning."

"You can't play golf this morning!"

Silence fell for a space—a silence broken only by George's tense breathing. Then Grace spoke impulsively.

"Oh, George, dear, it's nearly finished, and

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"GEORGE DID NOT REPLY. HE WAS STARING INTO THE MIDDLE DISTANCE, AND TRYING TO LIGHT AN EMPTY PIPE WITH AN UNLIGHTED MATCH."

I really do think that some of it is rather good. I am going to read it all to you after dinner."

George wandered blindly out into the sunshine, uttering little bleating sounds.

How strange it is, when things have gone awry, when Life, the pugilist, is battering us all over the ring, to look back at the comparatively mild beginnings of our misfortunes and remember how we thought then that Fate had done its worst. George, that night, fancied that his cup was full. Grace, he told himself, Grace, whom he had set on such a pedestal, had fallen. It was the limit, the extreme edge.

It was nothing of the kind. It bore the same resemblance to the limit that the first drop of rain bears to the thunderstorm.

He could not be blamed for the mistake. The acute agony which he suffered that night, from the "'Parted Ways,' a Novel, by Grace Marlowe," to the "That's as far as I've got—well, what do you think of it, dear? Honestly I really want your candid opinion" in the middle of Chapter Twenty-Five, was sufficient excuse for his blunder in supposing that he had drained the bitter cup to the dregs. He writhed unceasingly.

It was a horrible, an indecent production—not in the sense that it would be likely to raise a blush to any cheek but his, but indecent because she had put on paper in bald words every detail of the only romance that had ever come under her notice—her own. There it was, his entire courtship, including the proposal and the quarrel which they had had within two days of the engagement. In the novel she had elaborated this quarrel, which in fact had lasted almost exactly three-quarters of an hour, into a ten years' estrangement, thus justifying the title and preventing the story finishing in the first five thousand words.

He marvelled how women could do these things. It made him, personally, feel as if he had been suddenly stripped naked while walking up Piccadilly.

Something of his feelings he wanted to put into words, but one glance at Grace told him that it was impossible. He would, he imagined, feel a certain shame if he ever hit or kicked Grace; but that shame would be as nothing to the shame he would feel if he spoke what he thought about "Parted Ways." It would be murder.

"Great!" he croaked.

Her eyes were shining.

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"Do you really think so?"

"Fine!"

He found it easier to talk in monosyllables.

"I don't suppose any publisher would buy it."

"Oh, well——"

There was consolation in that thought. He began to feel a little better.

"So what I am going to do is to pay the expenses of publication. Then it will be all right."

George did not reply. He was staring into the middle distance, and trying to light an empty pipe with an unlighted match.

And Fate chuckled grimly, knowing that it had only just begun having fun with George.

Once in every few publishing seasons there is an Event. For no apparent reason the great heart of the public gives a startled jump, and the public's great purse is emptied to secure copies of some novel which has stolen into the world without advance advertising and whose only claim to recognition is that the *Bootle Intelligencer* has stated in a five-line review that it is "readable." You cannot manufacture these miracles—they just happen.

The rising firm of Mainprice and Bassett published a first edition of five hundred copies of "Parted Ways"; and when they found, to their chagrin, that Grace was only going to buy twenty of these—somehow Mainprice, who was an optimist, had got the idea that she was good for a hundred ("You can sell them to your friends")—their only interest in the matter was to keep an eye on the current quotations for waste paper. The book they were going to make their money on was young Swaffham's "Rose-Red Lips of Vivette," in connection with which they had arranged in advance for a newspaper discussion on "The Sex Problem in Modern Fiction: Should there be a Censor?"

Within a month Swaffham was off the map. The newspaper discussion raged before an utterly indifferent public, which had made one of its quick changes and discovered that it had had enough of Sex, and what it wanted now was good, sweet, wholesome, tender tales of the pure, simple love of a man for a maid which you could leave lying about. And the particular tale which it selected for its favour was Grace's "Parted Ways."

It is these swift, unheralded changes of the public mind which make publishers stick straws in their hair and powerful young novelists go off and start writing comic scenarii for the movies. Up to the very moment of the change Sex had been the one safe card. Publishers' lists were congested with scarlet tales of Men Who Did and Women Who Shouldn't. And now the bottom had dropped out of the market without a word of warning, and practically the only way in which readers could gratify their new-born taste for the pure and simple was by fighting for copies of "Parted Ways."

They fought like tigers. The offices of Mainprice and Bassett hummed like a hive. Printing machines worked day and night. From the rock-bound Hebrides to sunny Cornwall a great cry went up for "Parted Ways." In every home in Greater London "Parted Ways" was found on the what-not, next to the wax fruit and the family photograph album. Clergymen preached about it, parodists parodied it, stockbrokers stayed away from the *revues* and cried over it. It broke like a tidal wave over the entire country.

And on the crest of the wave, breathless but happy, rode Grace. George? Oh, that's George, spluttering down in the trough there, somewhere. We can't be bothered about George now.

George, however, found ample time to be bothered about himself. He passed the days in a frame of mind which it would be ridiculous to call bewilderment. He was stunned, overwhelmed, sand-bagged. Dimly he realized that considerably over a quarter of a million perfect strangers were gloating over the most sacred secrecies of his private life, and that the exact words of his proposal of marriage were engraven on considerably over a quarter of a million minds. But, except that it made him feel as if he were being tarred and feathered in front of a large and interested audience, he did not mind that so much. What really troubled him was the alteration in Grace.

The human mind adjusts itself readily to prosperity. Grace's first phase, when celebrity was new and bewildering, soon passed. The stammering reception of the first interviewer became a memory. At the end of a week she was talking to the Press with the easy manner of an empress, and coming back at notebook-bearing young men with words which they had to look up in the office Webster.

And the Quiet Smile——

"Mr. Marlowe is also an author, Mrs. Marlowe, is he not?"

"Yes. My husband—writes."

And then the Smile.

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George never saw the Smile, for he was never present at these interviews. But he sensed it. He was aware of it in the atmosphere of the home. That was her attitude towards him now—a pleasant, indulgent, patronizing smile.

She had soared above his low-browed enthusiasms. When he suggested the links she excused herself. She had letters to get off. People would keep writing to her, saying how much "Parted Ways" had helped them, and she must answer. Autographs, too. She really could not spare a moment.

"But the Ladies' Open Championship! You must get some practice."

It had been settled between them during the honeymoon that this year she was to win the Ladies' Open Championship.

"I'm afraid I shall have to give up any idea of that now."

"Give it up!" gasped George.

"The date clashes with my lectures to the East Dulwich Progress Club on 'Some Tendencies of Modern Fiction,'" said Grace.

In all great tragedies there is some one point at which the sufferer realizes the futility of further struggles, some one moment at which he definitely admits defeat. It came to George now. With a silent gulp he faced the truth. His idyll was ended. His marriage was a failure. There cannot be happiness where there is not respect, and, though he loved her still, he could not respect a woman who talked in that light way of the Ladies' Open Championship.

Possibly it was the morbid lure which drags a murderer back to look upon the corpse that drew Henderson Banks, at this juncture, once more to visit the home he had wrecked. More probably, however, it was the thought of making ten per cent. on Grace's future earnings. Be that as it may, he came whizzing. Barely pausing to tell her the plots of the last six novels he had sold for other clients, he urged Grace to place her affairs in his hands.

Grace received him warmly. She was grateful to him for having shown her, if unconsciously, the right outlet for her genius. Henderson Banks returned to London her accredited agent.

It seemed to George, brooding upon life in the course of solitary walks, that, dating from soon after this visit of Mr. Banks, matters became even worse than they had succeeded in being hitherto. Use had accustomed him to a Grace who found no fascination in golf; Grace at breakfast, pre-occupied and silent amidst a jungle of letters from admiring readers, he could look upon without active discomfort; and Time, the great healer, had taken the keener edge off the misery of the quiet smile. But Grace irritable, Grace with little lines of bad temper spoiling her forehead, Grace biting her underlip and eyeing him with positive dislike when he spoke to her, was something new.

She had entered upon another phase—the worst, to date, of them all. It puzzled and worried George. He felt, not unjustly, that if there was to be irritability in the home, he was the person to supply it—not Grace. What, he asked himself, in his simple language, was *her* trouble? *She* was all right. She had sold over a hundred thousand copies of the only novel she had ever written. Newspapers published her photograph; schoolgirls wrote for her autograph; reporters treated her as respectfully as a heavy-weight pugilist. What more did she want? The injustice of the thing bore heavily upon George.

"What's the matter?" he asked, abruptly, one morning, observing across the breakfast-table a sudden deepening of the perpendicular line which had now taken up fixed-post duty between her eyebrows.

"What do you mean?"

"You're worried about something."

"No."

"Certain?"

"I've got a headache."

A few months back George would have become volubly sympathetic. Now, he merely fiddled silently with his roll. Becoming aware that Grace was watching his movements with a kind of tense fury, he suspended them, and there was an uncomfortable pause.

"I'm sorry," he said.

"So am I," said Grace.

It was not encouraging.

Presently she gathered up her letters and left the room. George lit a meditative pipe.

The result of his meditations was to send him, an hour later, laden with remorse and all the patent headache remedies which the local chemist could supply, to Grace's room. He had examined the situation squarely, and had come to the conclusion that he was a brute, practically a fiend. Had his manner during the recent interview been tender and sympathetic? It had not. He had looked like a stuffed frog and spoken like a bored policeman. He had conveyed the impression that he did not believe that she had a headache, that, if she had a headache, it was her

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own fault, and that, anyway, it was nothing to do with him.

He loathed himself. He was beyond the pale. He was the sort of man you read about in the character-study novels, the chap who breaks his wife's heart with his cold inhumanity.

Grace was sitting at her table, a pen in her hand. She looked at him with weary eyes.

"Oh, what *is* it now?" she said.

There are some speeches before which amiability wilts like a stricken flower, affection hits the resin with a thud, and the milk of human kindness is turned off as with a tap. The "Oh" was bad; the emphasis on the "is" was worse; and the "now" had all the quality of a well-directed punch on the solar plexus. George's remorse left him.

He was hurt and angry. There he stood, the human pack-mule, bowed down with the weight of the patent medicines for which he had sprinted a quarter of a mile in a hot sun; and all she had to say to him was, "Oh, what *is* it now?"

There have been dignified men in the world before, and there will be dignified men again; but none will surpass the dignity which George achieved at that moment. Pale and silent, he took the packages from his pockets one by one, and laid them on the table. His manner was a sublime blend of the martyr at the stake, pained but uncomplaining, and the conjurer producing rabbits from a hat.

"I am sorry to disturb you," he said. "I brought you these for your headache."



"THERE GEORGE STOOD, BOWED DOWN WITH THE WEIGHT OF THE PATENT MEDICINES FOR WHICH HE HAD SPRINTED IN THE HOT SUN."

And he turned to leave the room.

Grace burst into tears.

"Oh, George!" she said.

There are some speeches before which dignity melts like ice in August, resentment takes the full count, and the milk of human kindness surges back into the aching heart as if the dam had given way. Of these "Oh, George!" is one of the most notable.

The only flaw in George's happiness, as he knelt beside her, babbling comforting words, was the firm conviction that Grace would lift the entire scene, dialogue and all, and use it in her next novel; and it was for this reason that, when he could manage it, he censored his remarks to some extent. But, as he warmed to his work, he forgot caution altogether, and by the time he had finished he had committed himself to about two thousand words of a kind calculated to send Mainprice and his partner Bassett screaming with joy about their office.

"Oh, George!" said Grace.

"My darling, what is it? I know it's something worse than a headache. Tell me."

Grace gulped. Then she spoke:—

"It's Mr. Banks."

"I'll murder him. I ought to have done it ages ago. One keeps putting these things off. What has he done?"

"He has been fixing me up solid."

"Fixing you up solid?"

"Yes, with everybody. He has arranged for me to do three more novels and I don't know how many series of short stories.

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"MY DARLING, WHAT IS IT? I KNOW IT'S SOMETHING WORSE THAN A HEADACHE. TELL ME."

And they've been sending me cheques in advance, millions of them. What am I to do?"

George reflected.

"Cash them," he said.

"But afterwards?"

"Spend the money."

"But after that?"

"Well, it's a nuisance, but after that I suppose you'll have to write the stuff."

"But I can't! I've been trying for weeks, and I can't write *anything*. And I shall never be able to write anything. I don't want to write anything. I hate writing. I don't know what to write about. I wish I was dead."

She clung to him, sobbing.

"I got a letter from him this morning. He has just fixed me up solid with two more magazines."

George kissed her tenderly. He was an author himself, and he understood. It is not the being paid in advance that jars the sensitive artist; it is the having to work.

"Drop the whole thing," he said. "Grace, do you remember your first drive at golf? I wasn't there, but I bet it travelled about five hundred yards, and you wondered what people meant when they talked about golf being a difficult game. After that, for ages, you couldn't do anything right. And then, gradually, after a year or so of frightful toil, you began to get the knack of it. It's just the same with writing. You've had your first drive, and it has been some smite. Now, if you're going to stick to it, you've got to do the frightful toil. What's the use? Drop it."

"And return the money?"

"No," said George, firmly. "There you go too far. Stick to the money like glue. Clutch it with both hands. Bury it in the garden and mark the spot with a cross."

"Then what about the stories? Who is going to write them?"

"I am. Dearest, when we were married I said to you, 'With all my worldly goods I thee endow.' They include an historical novel of life at the Court of Louis XI., which even I have never had the gall to offer to any publisher. We will put your name to it, and sit back and watch Mainprice and Bassett sell half a million copies. As for the short stories, I've one or two stowed away somewhere. The others I suppose I shall have to write."

His face clouded for a moment.

"It will cut into the mornings rather," he said.

Then he brightened.

"But, by lunching early, we ought to be able to get in a couple of rounds in the afternoons."

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# THE MAGIC HAND;

## OR, LIGHTNING-SKETCHING FOR THE CINEMATOGRAPH.

Written and Illustrated by

**HARRY FURNISS.**

FREQUENTERS of cinematograph theatres are familiar with the follow-my-leader crowds rushing like lightning after some Puck of the farce, up and down steps, across public thoroughfares, over bridges, and through tunnels, almost quicker than the eye can follow them. In reality these performers run much slower than if they were chased by a bull in real life, or were trying to catch the last motor-omnibus. The trick is very simple and purely mechanical. The operator in taking the picture turns the handle of the camera very slowly, getting six to eight pictures in a second in place of the usual sixteen. The operator turns the handle in the picture show—or, if turned by electric power, the motor—sixteen or more pictures in the second; whence the increased rapidity of action.

The "magic hand," the hand of the caricaturist which appears on the screen and with marvellous quickness reels off humorous sketches and adds legends with superhuman rapidity, is, to a certain extent, worked in the same way.

Of course no artists could possibly work at anything like the speed of these film-productions. The writer is perhaps as rapid a worker as any man who ever held a pencil, yet his speed is about one-half the rate of work shown on the screen, and that in mere outline. As this feature in the programme is,

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as a rule, limited to two or three hundred feet—taking about five or six minutes to run on the screen—one minute to one minute and a half is the average time given to each drawing. Yet one hour, or a day, or even a week, may have occupied the artist in the work shown in one minute. These trick films merely mean stopping the camera at suitable intervals. For instance, those ingenious animated toys or drawings in which the hand is not seen at work, and are thus supposed to change and act as if living things, are purely a matter of patience. A cinematograph film not being one unbroken stream of photography, but a series of separate and complete pictures which are projected on to the screen so rapidly that the eye is deceived and thinks the picture a continuous one, it is therefore easy to stop the camera at any point, change at leisure whatever is in front of it, and start again. In this way a man is seen running up to a wall—the camera is stopped just as he gets to it—the man walks away, the camera is set in motion, and, as a result, when shown, the man has apparently walked through the wall. So also will the "lightning-artist's" hand at work. One must not make a false line, but one need not—and, in fact, one cannot — hurry at anything like the rate of drawing as shown on the screen. About half that rate is a fair average.




THIS PICTURE OF JOHN BULL AT PEACE, COMFORTABLY READING A PAPER BY THE LIGHT OF A CANDLE—



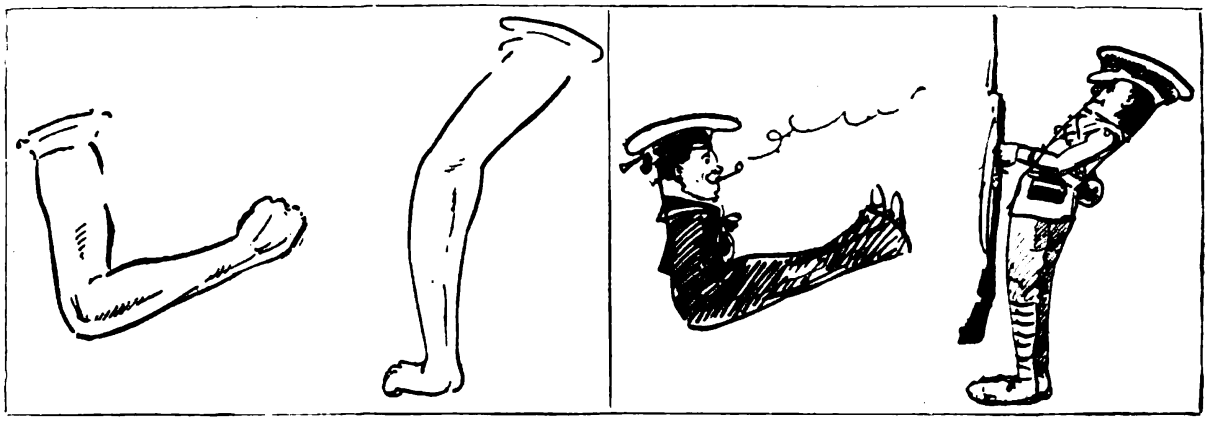

—IS COMPLETELY TRANSFORMED BY A FEW STROKES OF THE PENCIL, THE CANDLE BECOMING THE NELSON COLUMN, AND THE SCENE CHANGING TO TRAFALGAR SQUARE—




—WHILE A FEW MORE ADDITIONS CAUSE THE DOME OF THE NATIONAL GALLERY TO ASSUME THE LIKENESS OF THE KAISER, WHO IS EVIDENTLY ALARMED TO FIND THE BRITISH LION SO WIDE AWAKE.

The lot of the cinema "lightning-artist" is by no means a happy one. With the mass of hissing, rattling arc-lights in full force around one's head, the tremendous heat and the terrible light in one's eyes, the rapid click-click-click of the camera, the director's voice calling "Thirty seconds," "Forty-five seconds," "One minute," "Only forty-five seconds now to

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ENGLAND'S STRONG ARM AND USEFUL LEFT—

—WITH A VERY FEW TOUCHES BECOME REPRESENTATIVES OF HER NAVY AND ARMY.

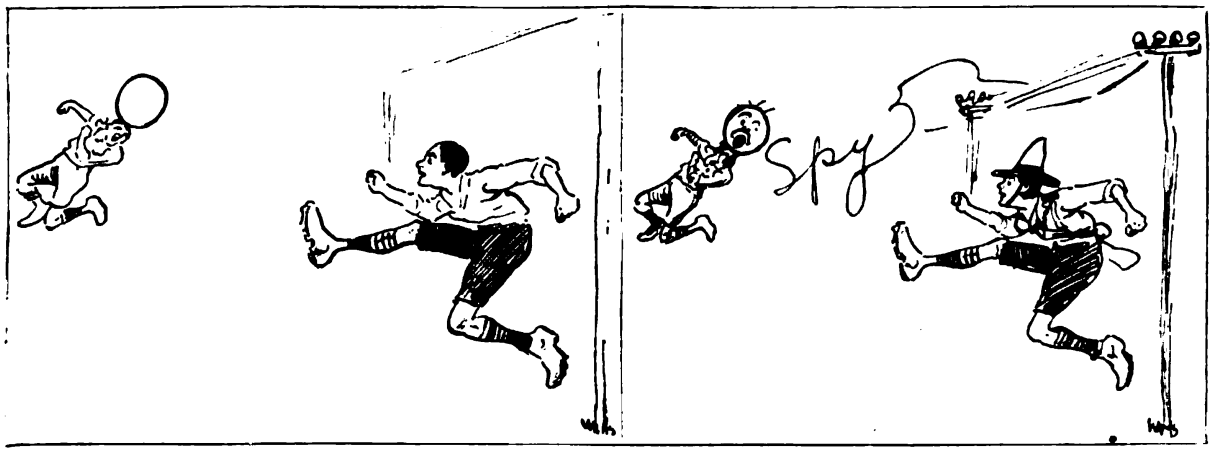
finish," and so forth, it is no easy performance to "make good" when doing the actual portions of the drawings which are shown on the screen. In fact, very few could even attempt it.

Until the outbreak of the war, when in consequence of the cinematograph trade being so upset ordinary pictures were impossible, I had never attempted this "magic-hand" caricaturing. I saw my way to produce some novel ideas in connection with the war, and these ran continuously at the Coliseum, London, for six weeks. Then I found myself paid that sincerest form of flattery, imitation. Others adopted my idea—of course, not my subjects.

I fitted up in my cinematograph studios a special room for this work. I call it my torture-chamber, for torture it is—while it lasts. At first, very foolishly, I did not protect my eyes from the strong violet rays of tremendous power, and but for a miracle would have lost my sight. I know better now.

Well, let me direct the attention of the reader to the sketches reproduced with this article, which will show with perfect clearness what cannot be so readily explained in words.

"Peace and War Pencillings" is the title I gave these caricatures apropos of the war—some innocent little pieces of humour representing Peace changing, with a few strokes, into War. For instance, there is an innocent suggestion of John Bull at peace comfortably reading a paper by the light of a candle, the candle being placed in a high candlestick. The second stage of this involves the changing of the scene to Trafalgar Square, the flame being turned into Nelson, the candlestick into Nelson's Column, and a slight suggestion added of the lions at the base, and of the National Gallery in the background. Then—War. On the newspaper the word is rapidly



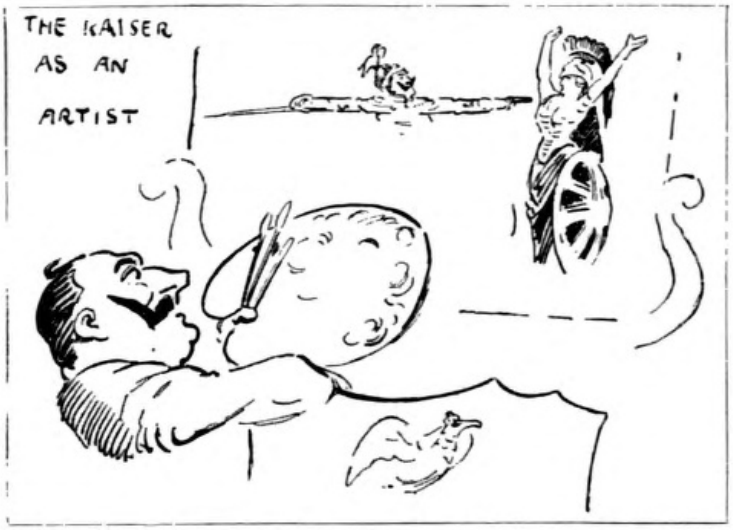

THE GAME OF FOOTBALL IN TIMES OF PEACE IS QUICKLY TRANSFORMED INTO—

—AN EVENT OF WAR—A SCOUT KICKING A SPY WHO HAS JUST CUT THE TELEGRAPH WIRES.

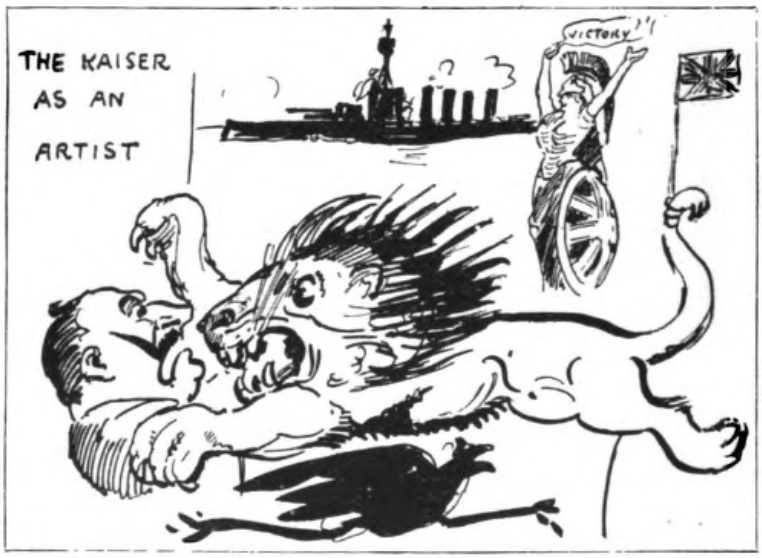
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written, the dome of the National Gallery becomes the Kaiser, the position of John Bull's head is shifted with a few strokes, the lions spring from the pedestals, the fountains represent cannonading, and—well, that is War.

This is my system through all the sketches. It is simply a case of building up stroke by stroke, and nothing that is once drawn is eliminated. "England's strong arm and useful left," you see, are actually the right and left arms of a man. The reader may be reminded that England's "Strong arm" is her Navy, so that in War we find the right arm metamorphosed into a sailor, while the same process applied to the left turns it into a soldier.




THE KAISER'S PICTURE OF BRITANNIA HOLDING UP HER HANDS TO PREVENT HIS INJURING HER WITH REVOLVER OR SWORD—




—UNDERGOES A STARTLING TRANSFORMATION.

The next sketch shows the popular game of football—the ball, kicked out from goal, is being "headed in" by a player in the most approved fashion. That is a game of Peace. Then, in a few touches, we have the scout kicking a spy who has just cut the telegraph wires—an event of War.

Perhaps my most elaborate attempt so far is entitled "The Kaiser's Picture." The self-satisfied artist is




THE HONEY-POTS AND THE BEAR ARE CLEVERLY CHANGED INTO—

—A SCENE FROM THE EASTERN THEATRE OF WAR.

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THE KAISER'S BAROMETER—"SET FAIR."

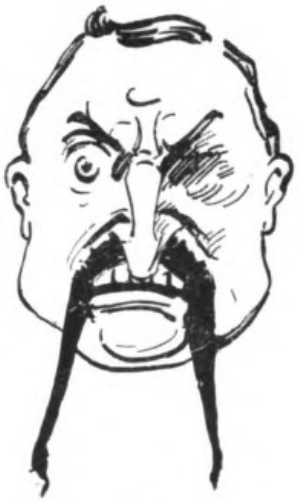
sketched contemplating his work, representing the great War Lord striking an attitude of the approved style of the "penny plain and twopence coloured" era. Britannia holds up her hands to prevent his shooting her with his revolver or cutting off her head with his sword. The painter's left hand holds the palette, whilst the right arm rests on the chair, on which is embroidered the Royal Eagle of Germany. With the exception of the Kaiser's picture, the scene is peaceful enough. Rapidly, however, the change must come. So the palette quickly becomes the head of the British lion, the line of the chair the lower outline of the lion's body and legs—see how simple it all is!—while the portions of the frame of the picture supply the right paw and the tail of the lion. The Kaiser's expression is easily altered by a touch or two, and his picture soon changed into an English man-of-war bringing victory to Britannia.

The next example, "The Honey-Pots and the Bear," is simplicity itself. Three beehives, three boxes of honey, three bottles of honey, and the peaceful bear approaching for a glorious tuck-in. Then comes the change to War. The beehives become German helmets, the boxes the soldiers' cartridge-pouches, and the bottles the soles of their boots. Thus a trick or two turns the ridiculous animal into the sublime Russian soldier.

The sketches representing "The Kaiser's Barometer" are not, as the other sketches, done by simple drawing. There is here an evident, and no doubt transparent, trick, in the mechanical working of his famous moustaches.



"STORMY."



!!!

Finally, the ostrich, allegorical of Australia, is made out of three German guns and some smoke. The reader of THE STRAND MAGAZINE may while away a few minutes by his Christmas fire in unravelling how this is done.




AN OSTRICH MADE OUT OF THREE GERMAN GUNS AND SOME SMOKE. HOW WAS IT DONE?

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# LUCIFER AT CARRYINCH

BY
MATTHEW TEMPLE
Illustrated by THOMAS SOMERFIELD

FATHER O'KEEFE came out of his garden and waddled ponderously towards his little church upon the hillock near the common of Carryinch. At a certain angle of the road he stood still to admire the new spire. It had been completed only a week ago. Sharply and slenderly it jutted against the blue. The sun shimmered with a metallic lustre upon the smooth slates, grey, green, and red, all laid in a pleasing diaper design. The gilded cross at the top, with its pointed spike to guard against the rash and injudicious lightnings, blazed refulgent. The substructure of the church was mediæval, battered, ivy-covered, and almost disreputable.

As the priest gazed at the new and saucy spire, set upon the venerable mass of six centuries, a suspicion stole over him that he had made a mistake, a grievous mistake in taste. But the design had been furnished by Brother Ryan, the architect of the diocese at Dublin. The spire reminded him uncomfortably of a drunken harridan he had seen at Ballymoy fair. She was dressed in dingy rags, but wore a towering new hat of resplendent silk, with feathers and golden bobbins.

Father O'Keefe had sweated his poor, hard-working parishioners in order to build this spire. It represented the savings and scrapings of some ten years. And now that it was completed, he admired it, but could not love it. His flock, to be sure, thought it marvellous, and almost worshipped it in their simple hearts. But to him it had suddenly become symbolical of impudent and perilous modernity. It was too spick and span, too brand-new, too obviously an excrescence of presumptuous mushroom pride. Moreover, it was far too lofty. For the same money he might have bought the magnificent organ the London agent had offered him last autumn.

But a little time would reduce its impertinent brightness, its incongruous freshness, its geometrical regularity. He reflected thus as he stood, fat chin in hand, his fingers gently stroking his large, loose, unshaven jowls. He would go and inspect its construction from within.

So he ascended the hillock, entered the vestry, and panted up the tower steps. He paused for some moments in the bell-loft and looked out at the panorama. From this height he could see into the windows and the yards of some of the cottages sprawling about the green. The doings of the cottage-dwellers were visible from here, an advantage he sometimes put to secret use in aiding the confessions of the forgetful. This served the double purpose of increasing their awe and respect of him, and all this redounded to the glory of the Mother Church.

From the bell-loft a ladder led up into the dark, pyramidal criss-cross of the spire. The heels of the main rafters, of new white oak, jutted down upon the stone corbels. He found a stumpy candle, lighted it, and ascended the ladder. He squeezed his stout body through the top trap-door, and stood on a small platform. The horizon rose with him. Through a narrow rift he could see the green tops of his native hills, for he was

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a "mountainy man." The sea between the distant hill-tops came into view, dark blue, and straight as a sword-blade bared. He ascended to a still smaller platform, built between the tapering rafters. He thrust the candle here and there and admired the joinery, good old-fashioned work of Tim Mashen's, dowelled and pinned and reinforced with iron angle-irons. He sniffed the fragrance of the fresh wood warmed by the sun. There was a small opening here, with a tiny door let into the rapidly-converging sides of the spire.

He opened this. A burst of vivid blue light direct from the skies flooded the interior. He thrust out his head. A thrill ran through his heavy body. The land lay below him, almost like a map. He gazed down upon the roofs of the houses and the crests of the trees. He saw the regular fields spread out like a crazy quilt—brown, green, and ochre. And now the sea rose higher still, a glorious band of ultramarine, a strip of immutable infinity. The purplish shadow of the spire, sharp and true, projected itself on the green beneath, The spire had its beauty and purpose after all. He felt a glow of pride. All this was owing to him! Then he reflected that he must not blacken his heart with earthly pride. Mentally he abased himself and murmured a few Latin words.

Suddenly he heard a harsh, regular, clattering sound—a whirring, humming roar. Had it been harvest-time he would have said it was the thrashing-machine in Farmer McLaughlin's barn. He saw the ploughmen in the fields stand still, stare, and point excitedly towards the north. Louder and louder grew the hideous noise. It must be one of those horrible motor-cars that sometimes tore snorting through the village. He hated them as infernal symbols of the modernistic spirit. They were swift, sulphurous, sleek, satanic contraptions, engines of worldly pride and luxury—the devil's own jaunting-cars, filled with his reckless mundane disciples, male and female. They had ground out the lives of some half-a-dozen of the best pigs in his parish, and only last autumn old Padraic O'Flynn had been run over by one of the black glistening beasts—monstrous armoured beetles that dashed madly over the green, peaceful land.

He scowled, shut the tiny trap-door, and prepared to descend, holding the stump of candle in his hand.

Then came a terrific shock, a thunderous crash of rending wood, a thumping and splintering of slates overhead. The steeple groaned and quivered under some great weight.

"Holy Mother!" cried the priest, pale as tallow, as he clutched the creaking rafters.

With trembling hand he poked open the small trap-door. Cautiously he protruded his head. His first downward glimpse was of the cottages emptying themselves of their excited occupants, his second that of the shadow of the spire upon the green. It was no longer sharp, clean, and pointed, but monstrous and deformed. Two enormous ears or wings sprouted from it on either side. Alarmed, he twisted his body and looked upward with blinking eyes.

Two colossal grey wings blotted out the heavens. The metal body of the gigantic bird was transfixed by the sharp golden spire like a dart through the breast of a gull. The scimitar-like propeller-blades of polished wood stood rigid. In the body of the apparition sat a man. He, too, was hideously deformed, had large goggle eyes, and wore a fantastic helmet on his head.

"Save us! 'Tis the divil himsilf!" murmured Father O'Keefe, and crossed himself.

The situation was tremendous and dramatic. What was he to do?

Summoning all his courage, he bellowed into the heavens:—

"*Retro me, Sathanas!*"

The nearness of the deep bass voice startled the strange being above him. He twisted himself and looked down the sloping sides of the spire.

"Halloa!" he cried. "Where are you?"

Father O'Keefe had a thrill of dismay as he saw the man's face. It was a dark and diabolical face, with a black moustache and a Mephistophelian goatee. Two dusky eyes shone behind the round and enormous goggles. Above the wide-brimmed, remarkable helmet two prominences jutted up—precisely like horns.

"Who are you—and what do you want?" thundered the priest, the loudness of his voice outbraving the thumping of his heart.

He was conscious that his parishioners were gathering on the green below. He must deal heroically with this thing, be it man or devil.

"My name is Ishingham," said the man in the helmet. "I have had the good—and bad—fortune to collide with your steeple."

"Where d'ye come from?" asked the priest, superstitious surmises still rioting through his mind.

"From Manchester, from London," said the airman. "I'm flying the circuit of Great Britain. I've lost the race, but I've saved my life."

There was a mournful note in his voice.

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"A race, is it? So that contraption ye're sitting in the belly of is an airship, is it?" asked the priest.

Dimly he had heard of airships and aeroplanes, and knew that such things were abroad in the ungodly world of to-day.

"It's an aeroplane—a monoplane," said Ishingham.

"An airyplane, is it? Well, and ain't the air big enough for ye, and broad enough and high enough for ye, between God's green and God's blue, but you must come a-smashin' down upon me lovely new shpire that I've just had built; and that with the savin's av tin years?"

"I'm very sorry about the spire," said Ishingham; "but my machine, you see, is also smashed."

"It's the justice av the Almighty upon ye," cried the priest, "for defyin' av His laws! It's your sinful arrygance and folly and pride av the flesh that makes ye thry to imitate the blessed birds av the air. You and the likes av ye have made a plot with the Prince av the Air, and now ye're speared up like a trussed goose on the point av a shpit. It's divine vengeance upon ye, it is, it is, indade!"

"I do not know, sir, how you work out that problem in theology. But it's really a simple problem in mechanics—in aeronautics. My engine misses fire, I volplane, I drop, I make a miscalculation, and bang! I plump straight down upon the spire. It seemed to shoot up from the ground."

"Like a mushroom, ye'd be sayin'? But I tell ye, 'tis a new shpire, and cost me and the good people av Carryinch a clear, bright two hundred and thirty-sivin pounds—and that took tin years to scrape thegither."

"I hope your builder made a good job of it," said the airman, eyeing the rake of the spire and the gilded rod of the finial cross. "My machine is an extra heavy one."

"That he did—as you'll be findin' out when ye'll be gettin' his bill!"

"His bill? I presume, despite your dependence upon lightning-rods and my own temporary dependence upon the same device, your steeple is insured?"

"Dishpite your own dependince upon it, sorr, it is not!" said Father O'Keefe, hotly.

Then a qualm of conscience seized him.

"That's to say, I'll not believe it's insured until I git me papers. And then it'll only be insured against the acts av God himself."

"Perhaps you'll consider me as an accident of God?"

"You, sor? Be cripes! if it's anythin' ye are, it's an act av the divil! Ye to come conflusteratin' across our fields and roofs, endangerin' av the lives av peaceful folk in your stink-and-clatter machine—you have the audacity to call yoursilf an act av God?"

"Well, perhaps I may call myself a temporary tenant of his—vicar—if that pleases you."

"It's blasphemin' again ye are," said the priest, a little more mildly. "It's the Holy Father at Rome that's called the Vicar av the Almighty, and not me poor and humble silf. No, indade."

"Consider me, then, as some wandering fowl of the air, that has alighted for a moment on your spire."

"Well, then, sor, consider that I shoo ye off."

The priest waved his arms.

"I don't see ye flappin' away—as ye moight, if ye were a stork or a spalpeen crow. Is it a pole I must be gettin' to push ye off?"

"That would prove disastrous," said the airman.

"Will ye throw a rope to the good bhoys down there and let thim be a-pullin' ye off? I suppose ye can fly as soon as ye get the lightning-rod out av the middle av that burst coffin-box?"

"No; that would be suicide—something I fear you'd not care to take upon your shoulders, Father. There's only one thing I can do."

He began to tug and fumble at his waist, and unbuckled a broad belt. He raised himself slightly in the body of the monoplane. The priest watched him with a dubious eye.

"Look out, yer rivirince; he's a-goin' to shtart the thing!" bellowed a thunderous voice from below.

"Your good bhoys down there are concerned for you, I see. Their sympathy is, however, very much misplaced."

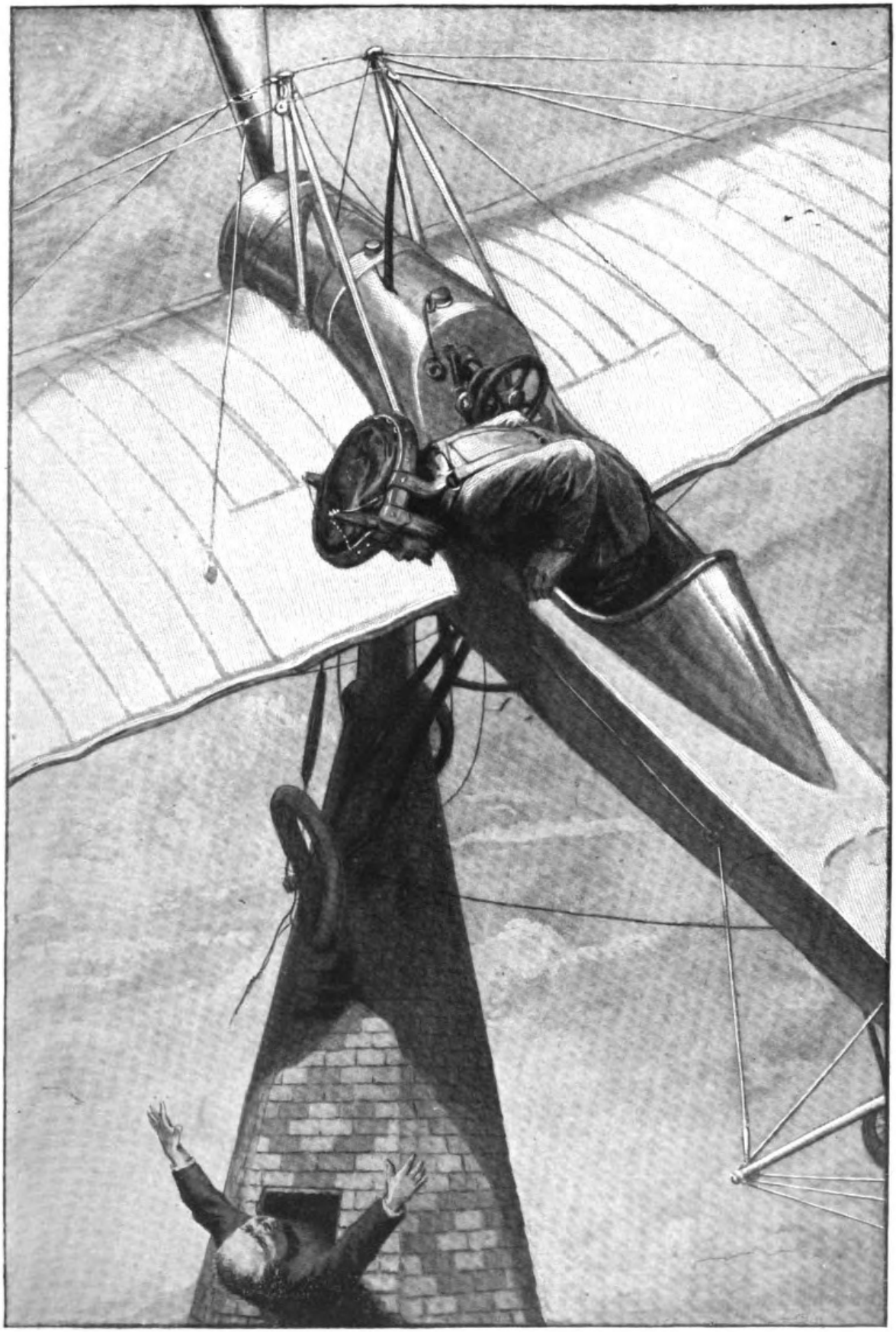
"Arrah! they love me, the dear cratures! They'd give their loives for me, each and ivery wan av thim," said the Father, proudly and tenderly. "They'd be tearin' a man to pieces for me sake—or the sake av me church."

"That is fine of them. But I am not unprepared to do feats of the same sort. Observe that this wide-brimmed hat I am wearing is something more than a hat."

"A hat, is it? Looks to me, sor, like a heathenish umbrella or a pot-lid."

"The simile is not flattering, your reverence, but the invention may, I trust, be useful. It is my own. Unfortunately I have so far lacked the courage to test it. Nevertheless, the time has come. If it succeeds I save my life—and make a fortune out of my invention. If it fails, I trust that you will see me decently buried in that pretty little

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"CONSIDER ME, THEN, AS SOME WANDERING FOWL OF THE AIR, THAT HAS ALIGHTED FOR A MOMENT ON YOUR SPIRE."

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churchyard over there between the fields and the woods."

The airman was now kneeling in his sloping car. Suddenly the aeroplane tilted an inch or two as it slipped into a new position. The aviator recovered his balance.

"Holy Mother! what are ye up to?" cried the priest, in alarm.

"This is my patent helmet parachute," said the man of Mephistophelian features. "It is made of leather and canvas. You will observe that the straps run not only under my chin, but under my armpits. In the crown is a parachute of strong silk, properly folded up. If I should leap out of the machine the up-rush of air under the brim would expand the parachute, and I should land safely on the ground. You will appreciate the simplicity and ingenuity of the contrivance, your reverence. I am very proud to have invented it."

He held out his arms as if preparing for a leap. A roar of terror, excitement, and consternation came from below.

"Shtop!" thundered Father O'Keefe, a dank dew of fear breaking out upon his brow. "What are ye up to, ye unholy lunatic? It's a drop av more'n a hundred foot to the bottom. It's bashed to a jelly ye'd be. It's God-defyin' self-murther, ye idjit, you!"

"My faith in my invention is strong," said the airman, "but not unshakeable. If you will devise another way of rescue for me, I'll be glad to consider it. A rope, perhaps——"

The aviator sat down. Father O'Keefe breathed a stertorous sigh of relief. Instinctively his hand wandered to the pocket of his cassock, where lay his beloved pipe. His sarcastic, calculating mood came back.

"A rope, is it? Shure, it's a hangman's rope ye mane—fit for the loikes av ye that come smashin' down like a harpy on the new and iligant shpire av the house av God."

"You are emphatic and picturesque, my reverend sir. I recognize the Celtic temperament, and the fact that you consider me as a sort of hostage, a kind of manna fallen from heaven, and to be converted into gold."

"It's a loose lip ye've got, and I'm suspicioned av the looks av ye. But if ye've fallen from heaven, it's not loike a kind av man—no, indade, but loike a kind av imp, loike Beelzebub and Lucifer! And afore I shtart me bhoys a-rescuin' ye, will ye be koind enough to tell me this: Are ye prepared to pay for the repairs to the shpire?"

"In case of difficulty with your insurance people, I'll see that a cheque is sent you."

"Oh, it's generous ye're growin' all av a suddent, is it? And raysonable loike. Ye'll see that a cheque is sent me, will ye? A bit av paper with a lot av printin' on it, and a lot av writin', and a name I don't know from Adam's? I've been taken in by thim before, me friend. There's no use at all we can make av cheques in Carryinch. It's the good rid coin av the realm that we'd be afther feelin' in our fingers."

The aviator twirled his moustache, then stroked his goatee.

"I've heard," said he, dreamily, "of mercenary clergy, but never of an airman that went about with a ballast of gold sovereigns."

"If ye prefer to be kipt a-hangin' there loike a thief on the cross or a scarecrow on a pole, in prifirince to makin' a dacint sittlemint, I can shtand it as long as yersilf."

"Let me consult my time-tables," said the airman, coolly, drawing forth a folder.

"And I'll have a shmoke. It's niver in a hurry we are at Carryinch."

The priest squatted down and rested himself on a cross balk. He stuffed his pipe and lighted it with the bearded candle which was still burning frantically inside the spire.

"That's an uncommonly bad tobacco you're using," came the voice from the heavens, after a space.

The only answer was in the form of furious volumes of smoke that came puffing out through the tiny opening.

Soon a dull commotion and a noise of shouting came to the priest's ears. He heard distracted cries of "Foire!" from the world below.

In order to reassure his flock, he thrust his arm with the pipe through the opening, and waved it to and fro.

But already there was a trampling of feet on the belfry steps, and cries of "Your rivirince!" and "Foire!"

"It's all roight, me lads," cried Father O'Keefe. "It's only meself that's havin' a quiet poipe. Go down agin, Shamus and Pat, and the rist av ye."

The bare feet and hobnailed plough boots were heard to descend.

A soft, melodious whistling was heard from overhead. The insolent sound irritated the priest. His anger went from his lips through his pipe, and issued in belching clouds of tobacco smoke.

Then he became aware of a pungent, acrid odour, a gaseous smell that filled the interior of the spire. Something liquid ran down the rafters upon his clothes. A drop fell on his hand. He smelled it. The odour was choking—mephitic, vile.

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He once more thrust his head out through the tiny opening.

"It's me baccy ye're complainin' av, is it?" he thundered—"the best shag a man can buy in Carrollstown—the bad smell of me baccy ye don't loike? Well, I'll be tellin' ye this, young man—it's the finest Cologne water and attar av roses, not to mintion the blessed incense av the church itsilf, compared with the dunghill reek av the ile that's leakin' out av your devil's floying noightmare."

"Oil?" said Ishingham, peering about and examining something within the boat-like shell of his winged monster. "Oil? Great heavens, it's the petrol! The tank must have sprung a leak!"

"Pethrol, is it? Shmells to me more loike benzine, it does, the filthy shtuff!"

"Petrol," said the airman, leaning over the edge of his car and blotting out a vast space of the blue heavens and their milk-white cloudlets with his round, fantastic helmet, "is akin to the benzine family. It is merely another form of petroleum derivative."

"It shmells like Sodom and Gomorrah," said the priest; "it's like the breath av the Evil One himsilf. And it's bad 'cess to ye and an ill omen for the church that you should come here to baptize it with your pestiferous ile, smellin' av the pit av the damned, afore the pure rains av heaven had fallen upon it loike a benediction."

"In all garages and aerodromes," said Ishingham, a slight trace of anxiety in his bland and even voice, "you will find notices up—'No smoking allowed,' and sometimes 'Smoking strictly forbidden.'"

The priest grew florid in the face, then breathless, then explosive.

"No shmokin' allowed, is it? Av all the insolence—av all the puppified, unmitigated impudence! Be the Holy Mother, sorr! what d'ye mane? Here ye come tumblin' out av the clouds and crumplin' up me beautiful new shpire with yer hellish outrigger, and alarmin' the whole dishtrict, and now ye're givin' me the bitter edge av yer tongue. How dare you, sorr! How dare ye think av forbiddin' me to shmoke? D'ye know that this church is my church, and the tower av it too, and the shpire av it that ye're a-clingin' to this very moment, with your jerry-rigged carcass av tin and rags, to save yersilf from a broken neck? No shmokin'? Indade! And where moight I be a-shmokin' with a better roight than in the shteeple av me own parish church—will ye tell me that?—and offerin' up the incense av the good weed to the Throne av the Almighty?"

"My observation, my good sir, was meant as a warning, not as a command. You may not be aware of it in these parts, but smoking in the proximity of petrol is very, very dangerous."

"Dangerous, is it? And what d'ye call gallivantin' through the air over people's heads in your thrashing-machine—I suppose it isn't dangerous you'll be callin' that? There, me poipe's out! Beggin' your lordship's lave, I'll make so bold as to loight it."

He produced the candle from within the spire, where, up to this time, invisible to the man in the aeroplane, it had burned on. The priest held the flame to the bowl of his pipe and sucked it in, volleying forth blue-white clouds.

"A candle!"

The young man gave a hoarse cry and stood up in his narrow, coffin-like enclosure. His eyes rolled in his head. He had lost, suddenly lost, his imperturbable sang-froid, his insolent aviator's bravado.

"For Heaven's sake," he screamed, "put out that candle, or I'll jump! Don't you see the whole spire is soaked with petrol!"

Startled, the priest lost his footing upon the narrow cross-timber. He clawed out wildly with his hands. The burning candle fell inward.

There was the dull puff of an explosion. Some of the loose slates were blown off and flew into the depths. A tongue of clear flame, a bellying volume of pitchy smoke, rolled from the small aperture which, a moment before, had framed the purple face of Father O'Keefe.

Screams and groans came up from below.

The airman stood up pale and stern, his foot on the edge of his precarious nest. The blaze ran up the side of the spire, fiercely, exultingly. The spire became a single bloom of flame, through which its pointed outline showed black, like a wick. The aeroplane resembled an enormous phœnix, brooding upon a nest of fire in mid-air. Then little lines and lacings of flame outlined the taut, extended pinions like some huge pyrotechnic "set-piece," and soon these were ablaze. The horror-stricken people of Carryinch gazed upward at the mass of whirling flame.

Where was Father O'Keefe? Where was the airman? Suddenly they saw a human form leap from the core of the fiery tumult high above and plunge downward.

"It's the divil himsilf!" yelled Shamus O'Leary, and bolted across the green.

The form plunged downward. Then suddenly something loose and fluttering ballooned out from its head, rounded and filled and

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spread into a wide, umbrella-like contrivance. The swiftness of the man's descent was checked. Swinging from side to side, he came easily to earth at the very moment that Father O'Keefe, with singed hair, ripped cassock, and a face the hue of a negro's, burst like a round projectile from the arch of the church.

The people of Carryinch, the parishioners of Father O'Keefe, cheered at sight of him. But the widow Machree, who had shrieked that there were "two divils instead of wan," sat on the turf, rocking to and fro and keening miserably at the burning of the spire. The aviator stood in the centre of the re-gathered group that had scattered like poultry at the swoop of a hawk.

Ishingham was dancing about and trying to disengage himself from his helmet-parachute. At last the straps were loosened and the contrivance fell to the earth in a limp mass of straps and oiled silk.

"It's a success!" he cried, exultingly. "A wonderful success!"

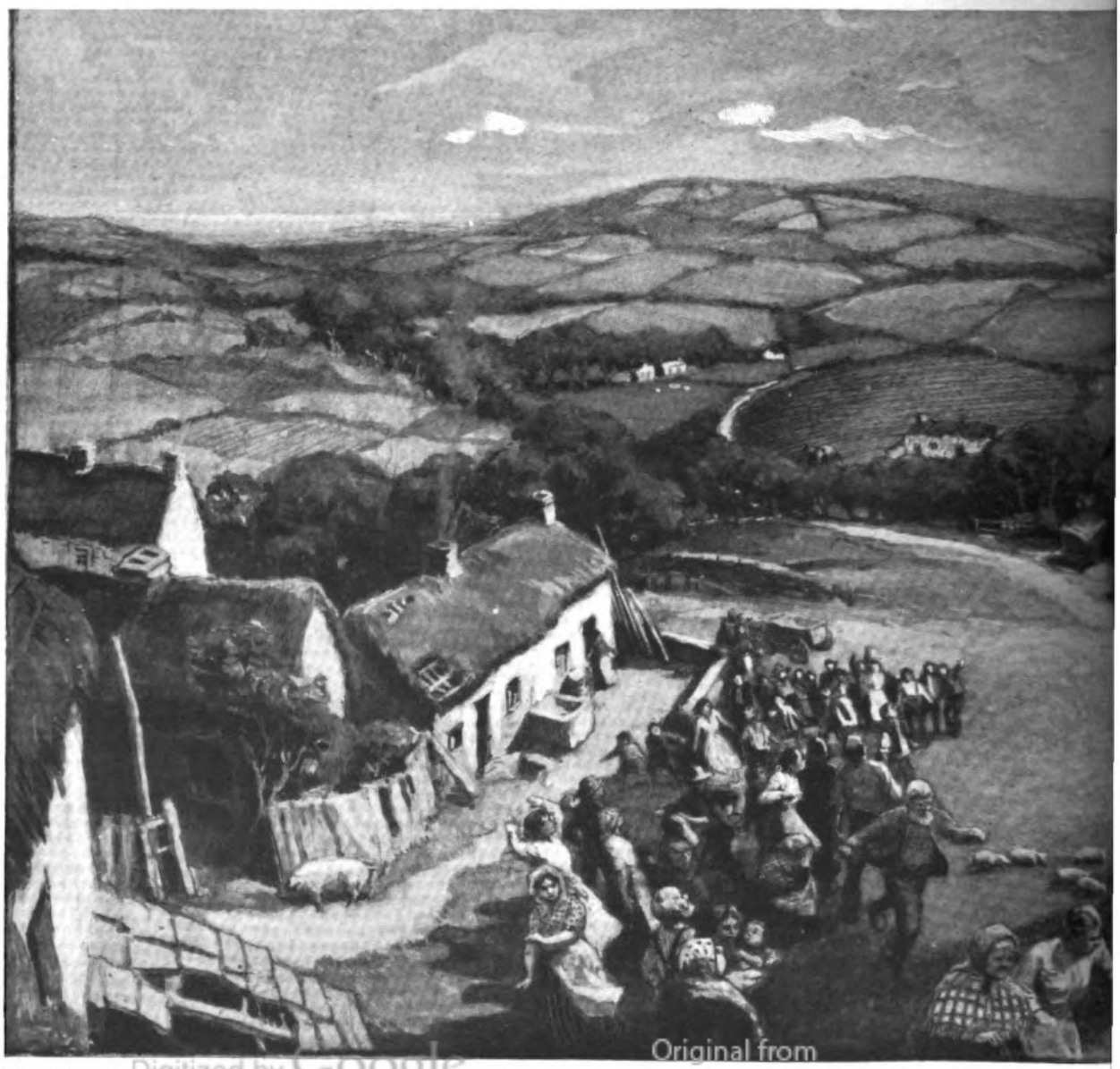
They crowded about the visitor from the heavens. His weird helmet and goggles removed, he was rather a handsome, pleasant-faced young man. He smiled into their simple peasant faces and shook hands with all.

"My fortune's made!" he said. "The thing's a marvellous success!"

He saw Father O'Keefe standing and gazing with tragic mien at the flaming spire. He went over and offered his hand. The priest frowned sternly and ignored it.

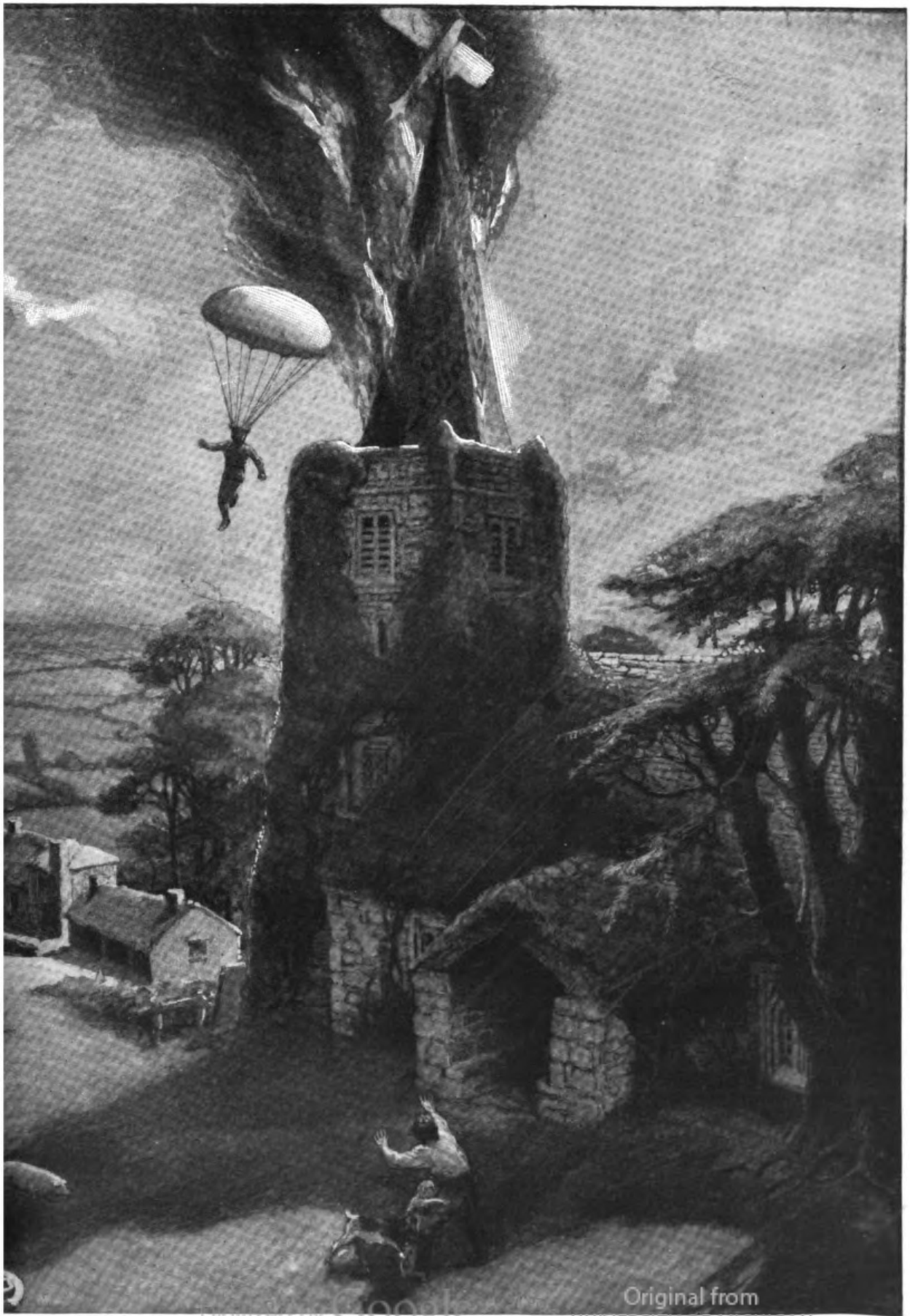
"I think ye're the divil himsilf," he said.

"You have complimented me in the same way before," said the smiling aviator.



"THE FORM PLUNGED DOWNWARD. THEN SUDDENLY SOMETHING LOOSE AND FLUTTERING BALLOONED

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OUT FROM ITS HEAD, ROUNDED AND FILLED AND SPREAD INTO A WIDE, UMBRELLA-LIKE CONTRIVANCE."

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"Lucifer, if I remember, sometimes goes by the name of the Prince of the Air. But really, Father O'Keefe, who started the fire? Tell me that. It was yourself—a plain case of involuntary arson, and probably homicide, for you almost served me up as a burnt sacrifice."

They watched the spire burn down to the tops of the old belfry walls. The blazing monoplane sent down showers and flakes of flame from its fiery wings. Its metal frame and wires grew red-hot, the stay-rods warped and bent. When they reached the top of the old tower, the flames yielded up the ghost and succumbed to the buckets of water that were dashed upon them from the bell-loft. The gaunt framework of the spire, charred and blackened, still lifted its sharp, triangular skeleton against the sky. And balanced across it almost at right angles, like a spar across a mast, hung the metal framework of the aeroplane. It was like the bony structure of some titanic pterodactyl, its engines and pipes like the shrivelled-up organs and muscles of the beast, making a dark tangle in the centre. Spire and aeroplane lifted themselves desolately in the mellow Irish sunlight.

The aviator had recovered his usual composure and dignity. He contemplated the ruins and remarked quietly:—

"It was a machine of the latest type. The collision did not damage it very much. I might have saved it but for the fire."

The priest heard the semi-soliloquy, and strode up to the young man, his eyes rolling in his sooty face.

"Saved it!" he bellowed. "Saved that unholy hell-bat! It's thankful ye ought to be that ye're saved yersilf."

"Is there anything in my demeanour, sir, that suggests that I am not?" asked Ishingham, somewhat nettled. "And there will be many an aviator hereafter who will be thankful to me for saving *his* life," he added.

He pointed to the discarded helmet and its harness upon the ground.

"The rights of that invention of mine are worth thousands of pounds."

Then, turning to Father O'Keefe, he went on:—

"Your spire's a complete loss. What did it cost?"

"Two hundred and thirty-sivin pounds sixteen and sivinpence," said Father O'Keefe, and thought of how that affrighting sum had been accumulating—by doles of pence and sixpences.

The stranger drew a cheque-book from his pocket and a fountain-pen.

"Here's a cheque for three hundred pounds," said he. "Quite a good cheque. Your builder will not refuse it, I'm certain. And when you rebuild, I'd be obliged if the engine up there is sent back to me in London."

Once again he extended his hand. This time the priest seized it in his own grimy fist and shook it heartily.

"It's your pardon I'm after askin', sorr. There's nothin' very divilish about ye, after all."

The aviator lifted his life-saving parachute-helmet from the ground and turned to go.

"Even churches," he said, with a laugh, "ought to be insured against incendiarism—in these days of hell-bats."

He inquired the way to the nearest railway station, and then went swinging down the road. He turned and waved his hand to the good folk of Carryinch. They cheered him, and he vanished around the bend.

Then old Dan Harrison, the letter-carrier, came limping into view.

He made his way to Father O'Keefe, and handed him a long envelope.

"Praise be to God and all the saints," cried the priest. "It's the insurance policy—the foire insurance policy, me dears. They've accepted us—the money's saved!"

He waved the long, seal-beplastered paper in the air.

"We'll begin rebuilding at onct," said Tim Mashen, the carpenter.

"That would be suitin' the like av ye, eh, Tim Mashen?"

He mustered himself, cleared his throat, and set his face as for a sermon.

"No, me good friends, the more I think av it, the more I believe that shpire was nothin' but a visible and vexatious symbol av sinful pride. There, barrin' the black timbers, stands the ould church as she's stood for five hundred years. Look at the graceful loines av her now. It's loike the face av a good ould frind. Shure, the more I think av it, the more I feel 'twas shpoiled by the sharp and new-fangled business av the shpire."

"Roight ye are, yer rivirince," cried a loud voice. "Shure, 'twas loike a dunce's cap clapped over the brow av a holy man."

"What'll we do wid the money, Father O'Keefe?"

The voice was a woman's.

"I'm thinkin' a foine new organ would be a better invistment, Susan Flynn. And there's some repairs to be made at the parish house, as ye well know, all av ye."

"We're gittin' double money," chuckled Shamus Tooley.

"Who'd be grudgin' tha Lord a bit av interest?" said the priest.

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# SOVEREIGNS AS THEY ARE.

## By H.R.H.

# The Infanta Eulalia of Spain.

III.

# My Visit to the Courts of Italy and the Pope.

I WAS at Genoa, and one spring morning I strolled through a network of narrow streets to the harbour. The sea was as blue as a turquoise, gleaming like a jewel in the sunshine, and I could not resist the temptation to hire a boat and waste an hour gliding over the enchanted waves. The boatman who rowed me was a lively fellow. Luckily for me, as I afterwards realized, he had not the faintest idea who I was, and I let him chatter to his heart's content.

"The old Duke of Galliera gave twenty million lire to make that," he said, indicating, with a jerk of his head, the new harbour, hidden from sight by the building on the Molo Vecchio.

"The Duke of Galliera," he went on, "was a fine gentleman, but the Duchess was wicked. She was left a widow, and inherited the enormous, the colossal, fortune of her husband. And what did she do? Does the signora know what she did?"

I did know, but I thought it prudent to shake my head. The man leant on his oars and looked intently at me.

"The Duchess," he said, "left the title and every lira she had and her palace in Bologna and all the estates of her Duchy to foreigners. A curse on them! The old Duke's son was left a beggar. And the Duchess belonged to Genoa; she had relatives in Genoa. Did she remember them when she died? No, not a single copper did they receive. Everything went to the Duca di Montpensier, a Frenchman who had become a Spaniard, and now it belongs to his son."

"Really," I said, and did not mention that the Duc de Montpensier was my father-in-law, and that I was actually Duchess of Galliera.

"If I could get hold of that man and his wife, although she is an Infanta of Spain, I would kill them," he shouted at me fiercely. "I would show them no mercy."

On the whole, I was not sorry when I found myself on land again, and I am convinced that the man would have upset his boat and let me drown if he had discovered who I was. And I have often wondered who he was—perhaps a relative of the old Duchess. There was truth in the story he told, a mystery which neither I nor anybody else is ever likely to solve.

The Duke of Galliera had a son, Phillipo Ferrari, who refused absolutely to use the privileges which his birth had bestowed upon him. What were his reasons nobody knows. Some say that he told the Duchess that the Galliera fortune had been acquired by evil means, others that he believed he was not really the Duke's son, others that he is a Socialist. And why, in default of the son, one of the richest duchies of Italy was left to my father-in-law is a question which remains, and is likely to remain, unanswered. Phillipo Ferrari is said to be a cabman in Vienna, and fate has decorated me with the unnecessary title of Duchess of Galliera. And partly through the strange connection of the family into which I married with Italy, partly through my love of the most beautiful and romantic land in Europe, I have lived there a great deal. I used to stay often at the magnificent palace of the Galliera family in Bologna, a sumptuous place with vast rooms paved with mosaic and glittering with rare marbles. The people of that city of colonnades and cool courtyards took a kindlier


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view of the new owners of the palace than the Genoese boatman did, and the ancient families of the place had that charm of manner which gives such a fascination to the cultured society of Italian towns. It was a great delight to receive them, and I used to enjoy the balls and parties in that wonderful palace.

No member of the Royal Family of Spain can stay in Rome. Obviously we cannot go there and ignore the King and Queen of Italy, nor can we omit paying a visit of respect to the Pope. As the quarrel between the Quirinal and the Vatican continues, and the Holy Father does not permit Catholic princes to visit the King of Italy in Rome, the only thing that we can do is to stay away. I myself have tried more than once to spend a little time in the Eternal City, but the result has always been the same. As soon as my arrival is discovered, I am confronted by one of the two Spanish Ambassadors, anxiously imploring me to go away as quickly as possible, and telling me a pitiful tale of the diplomatic complications which will arise if I persist in staying. Once, however, I set aside all objections to my presence in Rome, and went to see Leo XIII. about a very important matter in which the supreme ruler of the Catholic Church could alone help me. I hoped to persuade him to annul my marriage with the son of the Duc de Montpensier, and I felt certain that there were solid grounds for doing so and that the laws of the Catholic Church were on my side.

The Duc de Montpensier lived in Spain, and had indeed assumed Spanish nationality. I saw that if I married his son I should be able to remain in Spain, and be constantly with my dear brother, Alfonso XII. That was the argument which weighed with me, when it was proposed that I should marry the Duke's son Antonio. He did not interest me, and I knew that I could never love him; but I also knew that a princess's marriage is rarely one of her own choice, and that family reasons and international considerations play a greater part in determining it than affection. With Antonio as a husband I could remain with the brother whom I loved more than anybody on earth, and were I to refuse, it was certain that I should be forced to marry some foreign prince, whom I should probably dislike, and be obliged to spend the rest of my life at a foreign Court without the consolation of my brother's love. I consented, therefore, to the engagement, and it was publicly announced. The Duc de Montpensier was delighted, for he was very fond of me, and, moreover, he wanted to see his son an Infante of Spain, a title he could only acquire by marrying an Infanta.

And Alfonso XII. died before the marriage was celebrated, cut off while still young from the splendid work he was doing for his country. From my point of view, no reason remained for my marriage after my brother's death. I announced that it would not take place.

"I consented to marry Antonio in order to be near Alfonso," I said, "and, now that he is dead, the one argument that prompted me to take this course has fallen to the ground."

I had not thought of the political complications which my refusal would entail. When the Duc de Montpensier heard that I had rejected his son, he flew into such an uncontrollable passion that he rushed about the room in which he was, breaking up the furniture and smashing anything he could lay hands on. He had set his heart on Antonio's children becoming Infantes of Spain, and was furious when he saw that it was possible that his ambition would not be fulfilled.

Alfonso's wife, Queen Christina, had been appointed Regent. Her position was a difficult one, and there were fears of an attempt to place Don Carlos on the throne. The Duc de Montpensier was exceedingly wealthy, and possessed great influence in the country. It was feared that, if I proved obdurate and persisted in my refusal to marry his son, he would throw in his lot with the Carlists and join in an attempt to drive the reigning family from the throne. The Queen came to me and implored me to consent to the marriage, pointing out to me the harm that might be done to Spain if I would not alter my decision. Then my sister, the Infanta Isabel, came to me, repeated the same arguments that Queen Christina had used, and added new ones. One by one the Ministers arrived to argue with me. Nobody was on my side. Everybody told me that it was my duty to marry Antonio, until at last I felt that the fate of Spain depended on my decision. I was a mere girl, standing at the threshold of life, and the inevitable happened. Wearied and worn out with the struggle, I finally gave way.

"I sacrifice myself for the welfare of the nation," I said.

My marriage is the most cogent proof I can offer of my love for Spain, and I went to the altar for the wedding ceremony as a victim.

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It is a well-known principle of ecclesiastical law that a marriage contracted against the will of one of the parties is invalid, even though children be born to the couple. It was on this principle that I relied when I went to Leo XIII., and my object in asking him to annul my marriage was, not to be free to marry again, but to be free to manage my own fortune in order to leave some provision for my children. I brought with me to Rome a letter from my mother, Queen Isabel, in which she told the Holy Father that she could not die happily without the knowledge that my marriage had been annulled, and set forth the arguments to prove there were grounds for the Church to give me the freedom I desired.



**POPE LEO. XIII.**

I was full of hope when I arrived in Rome. I was so sure that my cause was a just one, so certain that I should gain the day, so convinced that there was no flaw in the arguments presented in my mother's letter. Moreover, I knew that Queen Isabel was *persona gratissima* at the Vatican. She was the first Catholic Sovereign to signify her acceptance of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception as a dogma of faith, and she had always done her utmost to further the interests of the Church. I felt that I could not have had a better advocate, and it seemed to me that I had only to go and see the Pope in order to be released from a crushing burden.

Wearing the costume which every woman, be she princess or peasant, must wear when she is received in audience by the Pope, a black dress and mantilla, I arrived at the Bronze Gates of the Vatican. The magnificent staircase was lined with soldiers in the picturesque uniform Michel Angelo designed for them, and I was promptly made the centre of a little procession. On either side of me walked an urbane ecclesiastic—in palaces one seems to spend half one's time walking between two polite and deferential individuals—and before and behind marched soldiers of the Noble Guard. We passed through a series of splendid halls to the papal ante-chamber. A door was opened, and I passed alone into the presence of the Supreme Pontiff. I made a genuflexion as I entered, another in the middle of the room, and a third as, feeling rather like a grasshopper, I reached the chair in which the Holy Father was seated.

The face of the aged Pope was so shrunk that there seemed nothing of it left but the yellowed skin stretched over the bones, and when he turned to me I saw shining in the midst of that shrivelled countenance the face of a man who had lived through the centuries, dark eyes so brilliant and so alert that their glance seemed to pierce one, to scorch one like a flame.

He bade me sit down, and with great kindness thanked me for all that I had done for the Church and commended my zeal and piety. Being conscious that I did not deserve this praise, I felt a little surprised, and quickly realized that Leo XIII. did not know who I was and mistook me for my sister, the Infanta Paz, who is never happier than when she is advancing the interests of the Church in Bavaria, her adopted country. I quickly explained that I was the Infanta Eulalia, and presented the letter I had brought for him from Queen Isabel, telling him that it was my mother's appeal to him to have the marriage which had ruined my life annulled. He took the letter and held it, but he did not read it.

"Her Majesty's request shall be considered by the Sacred College," he said, and began to speak to me in a manner which, I have no doubt, he thought might be of spiritual benefit to me and might give me comfort. But I had not come for comfort or to listen to spiritual exhortations. I went to see the Pope as I should have gone to see a lawyer, hoping that the Head of the Catholic Church would put the law in motion and give me the freedom I felt certain that that law permitted. But His Holiness refused to play the part I had assigned to him, and spoke as priests speak.

"Ah!" he said, when I had told him of the unbearable position in which I was placed,

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**QUEEN ELENA OF ITALY.**
*Photo. by Guigoni & Bossi.*

tied to a husband with whom I had no sympathy, and who spent his time with another woman, "this life is a trial, and you must bow to the will of God; but we shall try to do what we can for you."

"It is so sad for my children," I said, "that I should remain in this terrible position. As your Holiness is aware, any fortune which I have can, according to law, be claimed by my husband. The law gives him the right to dispose of it as he likes, while I am deprived of the right of leaving it to my children. And I need not tell your Holiness to whom he will probably give it."

Leo XIII. turned and fixed his piercing eyes upon me.

"I hope that, with time," he said, speaking slowly, "your husband's heart will be touched by the grace of God, that he will leave this woman and come back to you."

Nothing could have been more distasteful to me than the prospect the Pope held out, and I saw that it was useless to continue the conversation.

"Your Holiness is fatigued," I said, and retired without waiting for him to say that the audience was ended.

They were very angry with me for not conforming to the prescribed etiquette, and I was told I had behaved very badly. It was undoubtedly very kind of the Holy Father, who was then old and feeble, to give me so long an audience, but I think he must have been relieved when I somewhat abruptly terminated it.

After my visit to the Pope, I went to see the Secretary of State, Cardinal Rampolla, a man with a fine presence and the perfect manner of a Sicilian nobleman. I repeated to him the arguments I had placed before the Pope, and told him of my mother's great desire to know that my marriage was annulled before she died. He was exceedingly polite, and said the matter should be considered, but he was careful not to commit himself. And I made a point to go and see all the Cardinals who were then in Rome, and to put my case before them. They were all excessively urbane, and all of them assured me that the question would be most carefully examined.

From that day to this I have never heard another word about it, and no answer was ever sent by Rome to Queen Isabel's letter. I am still convinced that, *according to ecclesiastical law*, my marriage *could* be annulled on the ground that I was forced into it against my will, but I now realize that I merely wasted my time in going to Rome. The scandal created by the annulment of the marriage of a Spanish Infanta would be too great, and to avoid it the Church refuses to put her law into operation.

The Italian Royal Family was probably not entirely gratified by my visit to the Vatican, but I was able to smooth matters over when I met the King elsewhere, and he was really very nice about it. He has been placed under a ban by the Vatican, but this fact does not weigh heavily on him, for he is not a man to fear ecclesiastical censure, and his standpoint is rather that of a freethinker than of a Catholic. Nevertheless, he would welcome an agreement with the Vatican which would put an end to a trying situation, and change for the better the present unfriendly relations existing between the Papal Court and the Quirinal. I knew the King when he was Prince of Naples, and saw a good deal of him when he came to England for the marriage of the Duc d'Aosta, as we were both staying in the same hotel. He is one of the most intelligent kings I have met, and remarkably well-informed. His hobby is numismatics, and his love of old coins is as great as the King of England's love of postage-stamps. He has, indeed, become a notable authority on the subject. Before his marriage, the King was a rather taciturn man, and his

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manner somewhat jerky. But the charming Princess Elena brought some spell with her when she left Montenegro and came to Italy to be married to him, for I have never known a man whom marriage has so transformed. It seems to have given him an altogether new zest for life and great happiness. The simple, almost patriarchal Court of Montenegro was an excellent school for a modern queen, and translation to the more splendid Italian Court has not spoilt Queen Elena. She has preserved her love of simplicity, and she follows with interest and sympathy the democratic movement.

It seems to be the special prerogative of a Queen-Mother to be Queen of Hearts, and Queen Margherita holds the same place in the affections of the Italian people as beautiful Queen Alexandra—has ever a Queen been more beloved than she?—holds in England, and the Empress Marie in Russia. I paid a visit to her and King Humbert at the Castle of Monza, their summer home in the outskirts of the town in which the kings of Lombardy were crowned, and, although the etiquette of the Court was severe, she had a charm which made one tolerate the restrictions of palace life. Those about her used to complain that she hardly ever sat down. I have remarked that several Queens whom I know have this rather trying capacity for standing, and, as nobody can sit while they stand, their guests and their ladies and gentlemen in waiting are sometimes a good deal fatigued. Numbers of women are not aware that they owe to Queen Margherita the pretty fashion of wearing a string of pearls in the daytime. But she did not limit herself to the single string of pearls worn by women of fashion; she was simply hung with ropes of pearls morning, noon, and night. In fact, I have never seen her without them.

Although the King of Italy has made Rome his capital, the other members of the Royal Family have never gone to live there, and continue to make their home in Turin. In that city there are no fewer than four Courts, for the Duke and Duchess of Genoa, the Duke and Duchess of Aosta, the Dowager Duchess of Aosta, and the King's sister, Princess Clotilde, all reside there, and the exasperating etiquette peculiar to Royal personages is rigorously maintained in their palaces. Gentlemen-in-waiting and ladies-in-waiting are always in attendance on them, and it used to surprise me that people could be found to devote themselves to such an insufferably dull occupation as that of serving in miniature Courts until I remembered that



**KING VICTOR EMMANUEL III. OF ITALY.**
*Photo. by Guigoni & Bossi.*

some of them may be glad to do the work—if work it can be called—for the sake of being maintained and of receiving the salaries attached to their offices. English princesses have the daily distraction of opening bazaars, but little happens to enliven the Courts of Turin. When I have stayed there, the chief excitement of the day has invariably been a drive to a park outside the city, where the Royal personages walked for a little, attended by the inevitable ladies and gentlemen in waiting, and, after half an hour of that mild form of exercise, drove back to their homes. These proceedings did not appear to awaken any great interest in the citizens of Turin; for in Italy, as in most other countries, the public has ceased to concern itself about the little doings of princes and princesses.

The Dowager Duchess of Aosta sometimes shows her independence by freeing herself from Royal bonds when she is abroad, and I remember her once arriving in Paris entirely unattended. She was Princess Laetitia Bonaparte before her marriage, and enjoys the style of Imperial Highness, while, rather oddly, the young Duchess of Aosta is a Princess of the House of Bourbon and sister of the Duc d'Orléans. She is a somewhat masculine type of woman, and spends a great deal of her time in Abyssinia. She leaves her

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husband and two boys and, with no companion except an elderly Englishwoman, sets out on a hunting expedition. She is lost in the heart of Africa for months, and then suddenly reappears and settles down to the humdrum life of her palace. But soon she hears again the call of the wild, and is away once more. What she does in Abyssinia nobody knows, if one excepts the elderly Englishwoman. The country seems to have cast a spell on her, and she cannot resist its fascination. The Duke of Genoa, Queen Margherita's brother, and his wife, who is a Bavarian Princess, live in the same palace as the Dowager Duchess of Aosta, but their households are independent, and, in point of fact, the two Duchesses rarely see each other. The Duke is almost a recluse; he spends several hours in his private chapel every day, lost in prayer and meditation. His piety, his profound belief in the teaching of the Catholic Church, his veneration for the successors of St. Peter, have all doubtless contributed to his determination to end his days in Turin and prevented his taking part in the life of the Court established by the Kings of Italy in the Roman palace which, less than fifty years ago, belonged to the Popes.



QUEEN MARGHERITA OF ITALY.
*Photo. by Guigoni & Bossi.*

There are so many beautiful Italian cities in which agreeable society may be enjoyed that, had one to choose one in which to live permanently, it would be difficult to come to a decision. Venice is one of the most adorable, and the time I spent with the Duke and Duchess of Genoa at the King's palace there was a dream of delight. But there is one objection, and that a serious one, to a prolonged stay in Venice, and that is the difficulty of getting proper exercise. As everybody seemed prepared to spoil me when I was there, I made it clear that it was essential for me to do something more vigorous than gliding down silent canals in a gondola or strolling in the Piazza. It was, therefore, arranged that I should play tennis at the Arsenal, and that indulgence gave me the one thing that seemed lacking in the charming life of the city. Italians can play tennis very well when they choose, and Monsignor Montagnini, the Papal Legate who was turned out of France when diplomatic relations between the Republic and the Vatican were ruptured, was a case in point. He played an excellent game, and we often had a set together in Paris. In Venice, too, I found some good players, and so managed to get the vigorous exercise I needed. Apart from this, I lived the life of the Venetians, walked in the Piazza from half-past eleven to half-past twelve, took the air in a gondola about half-past five, went occasionally to the opera at the Fenice, that most exquisite of theatres, and ended the day by dancing in the enchanted palaces that rise from the sea. It was often sunrise when I stepped into a Royal barge with gondoliers in scarlet, and, to the rhythmic music of oars that cut the water and the splash of the spray that fell from their blades, floated through the rosy dawn to the Royal Palace.



THE DUCHESS OF AOSTA.
*Photo. by Guigoni & Bossi.*

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# "LIGHT"!

## By Austin Philips

### Illustrated by Steven Spurrier

DEAR MISS STRETTON,—I feel I must really thank you for having recommended me "Les Misérables," and I congratulate the Braille Library upon the addition of so great and glorious a work. I am sure that it will help thousands of us to endure our affliction and to keep stouter and more constant hearts. I hope to look in for my usual talk with you to-morrow—Thursday—afternoon.

Yours sincerely,
ARTHUR LOGAN.

Mary Stretton, an assistant librarian at the Murcester Public Library, put down the Braille-written letter with a pleased little gasp. She took up a large envelope, opened it and, with increasing pleasure, read the communication which it contained :—

DEAR MISS STRETTON,—I must really write to say how much I have enjoyed reading "Les Misérables" and how greatly I am indebted to you for having overcome my prejudices against its enormous length. I hope to have my usual weekly book-talk with you on Friday next.

Yours very truly,
JOHN PILKINGTON.

Miss Stretton re-read both Braille letters, restored them to their envelopes, and put the envelopes into a pigeon-hole at the left-hand corner of her desk. She lay back in her chair, dreamed a little, took up a pen with an air of resolution, and began to enter details in a book. But while she wrote—and the work was largely mechanical—she was also able to think, to console herself for what she had missed, to accept without bitterness what she had suffered, to be grateful that she had never known illness, to feel that, despite poverty, plainness, insignificance, she had not lived in vain. It was something—even if one was nearly fifty, faded as only a fair person can become faded, burdened with feeble relatives who needed supporting—it was something to have made her own little corner, to have specialized, however humbly, to be in charge of that particular portion of a great municipal organization which, obtaining them from the National Library in Bayswater, issued volumes of Braille literature to the blind.

She had not lived in vain—even though her figure was gone, her complexion perished, her youth over, and though too—since no man had ever courted her—she lacked even the memories of love. She had helped—she was daily helping—her fellow-creatures ; she was doing good work and doing it thoroughly ; she was appreciated by her committee and by those with whom she corresponded, such as the writers of the two letters which lay in

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the left-hand pigeon-hole of her desk. They were but two—though, perhaps, the two most important—of the many sightless people who visited her little room in the Public Library for literary guidance and advice. They were grateful, and she was grateful for their gratitude—she was human; she liked being thanked. As she sat at her desk she thought, not once but many times, of these two middle-aged men.

The writer of the letter signed "Arthur Logan" sat in a study in a residential suburb of Murcester, just eight miles away. He was a fine man; tall, slim, handsome, well-groomed, and tidy—not always the case with blind people, even when they are rich. He had been a cotton-broker, had been smitten with swift glaucoma, had retired from business, was a widower, childless, and fifty-five. Till the coming of his affliction, six years ago, he had read nothing except trade journals, financial papers, racing novels, and the famous *Murcester Scout;* he had been hard, narrow, unsympathetic, a complete materialist, and as ignorant of the humaner letters as only some business men can be. Since blindness had smitten him, having hours of tedium to occupy, he had learned the Braille alphabet, had read copiously, had begun to graft education upon experience, and, without in any way being conscious of it, was become a different man. His books reached him by post in the mornings—fat, heavy volumes with pages of thin cardboard embossed with dots innumerable, which, read with expert, comprehending fingers, conveyed the wisdom of the centuries to a never-satisfied brain. They came in special covers—light satchel things—cases which fitted loosely, upon which an elastic was slipped. He devoured them—as Carlyle devoured Gibbon—at the rate of one a day. Only the big things now appealed to him—the great human emotions, the vast eternal verities, the things that count in life. He loved literature. He was become a critic of it; he judged by one touchstone—Truth. Once a week—and this unfailingly—he motored into Murcester for a talk with Miss Stretton, who, within her limitations, helped him to choose his books. He looked forward to the visit. It had become a part of his life.

It was—this Thursday in mid-April—his day for calling on her. But he was now very uncertain whether or not he would go. Something had happened to worry him—something strange, mysterious, not for the first time. He sat with a little sheet of cardboard in front of him. He was reading it—as he had many times that morning read it—with fingers that were almost eyes.

It was a love-letter. He had found it—as he had found others—in the satchel-like cover which had brought his Braille book. The others he had ignored—amused and interested only—guessing that a blind lover had had the volumes before him and had left the missives therein. But again! It was too much, too pointed to be merely a mistake. It was meant for him—Arthur Logan. Clearly a woman had written it. This is what it said:—

> Have you had my letters? I have not had an answer to the two that I wrote. You are making me anxious. Has anything happened? You did not come last week to the Library. Can it be that you are ill?

It was signed "Mary." That was Miss Stretton's name. Last week he had been obliged to keep the house in consequence of a chill. Had he said something to her inadvertently—something which could be misconstrued? Had his interest in books been taken as an interest in *her?* Had she fallen in love with him? Did she expect a declaration? What was he to do?

Before his illness—and since his widowerhood—he had had many affairs with women. There was—he could not help knowing it—something about him that they liked. This knowledge—and the fact that he both prolonged his visits to Miss Stretton and showed her how he valued them—made him the more readily believe that letters—so obviously meant for him—could only come from her. She was the one woman with whom, nowadays, he spent *tête-à-tête* hours.

He did not love her. He had never seen her; but he was aware, very definitely, that she had no physical charm. He liked to talk to her. She was pleasant, human, interesting, and companionable. But to make love to? A thousand Noes!

He searched his heart vainly, trying to see at what time and in what fashion he had led her to misunderstand. He could discover nothing. Small courtesies, presents made out of gratitude, must have been taken by the little woman as significant of things unmeant. He had nothing with which to reproach himself. He could not help the fact that at five-and-fifty, despite his affliction, he was still of good appearance, unusually well-preserved. It was, this situation, an accident—not his fault.

Something must be done. And that

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immediately. The present position was impossible—quite. He could not let her go on waiting vainly for a declaration. That would be cruel. Callous before his affliction, since it had come to him he was most unwilling to wound. Should he write? It would be difficult. He might hurt her. And written words remain.

The blunt North-country spirit showed a way to him. It had ever been his fashion to face situations boldly; never to shirk and evade. He would go and see her. He would talk straight to her, be cruel—to be kind. He would go now—this morning. He would get it over at once.

He touched the bell on his table. A maid entered. He looked up with sightless eyes.

"Ask Mr. Biron to come to me," he said.

"Yes, sir."

The maid went out. A minute passed; two minutes. Then a young man came in. He was about five-and-twenty, tall, well built, handsome, the son of Logan's sister and a poor country parson, who had parted with him five years ago that he might become his uncle's right hand. He lived in the house, he had a hundred and fifty pounds a year pocket-money, and though in consequence of his duties he had little personal leisure, he had been definitely promised that he should benefit largely under his uncle's will. His face—while the features had nothing whatever of the born grumbler about them—was a little sad, a thought discontented, as of a prisoner or a hostage upon parole, with just enough liberty to keep him mindful of what freedom means.

As he entered his uncle raised his head.

"You will take me into Murcester, George!"

"Yes, sir; at what time?"

"At once. I wish to get my business over before lunch."

"Very well. I will go and order the car."

George Biron went out immediately. Logan, who had risen, groped his way back to his desk. He unlocked a drawer, drew out two Braille-written letters, ran his fingers over them to assure himself that they were those he wanted, took the letter which he had found that morning, and placed all three between the leaves of a note-book which he put into the breast-pocket of his coat. Then he rose and began to walk up and down slowly, pondering the coming interview, rehearsing what he should say.

His nephew entered. Logan stopped his promenade.

"Is the car ready?" he demanded.

"Yes. It is at the door."

The nephew came close as he answered, crooked his arm, and stood still. Logan's hand felt for, found, and rested on it. The two began to walk towards the door. They reached the hall, and Biron helped his uncle into an overcoat and assisted him down the steps.

The car started. It took them through country lanes for a little while; it reached suburban roads, passed into a long, straight thoroughfare, bordered at first by detached houses, then by shops and villas, then by large old houses whose once white walls were grimed with smoke and weather—past picture palaces, music-halls, factories—till they came to the Town Hall Square.

The car stopped at the Public Library. Logan got out, walked up the steps, and went along the great stone passages, leaning on his nephew's arm. They reached a door, knocked, heard a summons, and went in. The floor of the room was littered with large volumes of Braille literature and half-filled canvas bags. Two men were on their knees beside them. They were calling out numbers and names. Miss Stretton was at her desk, with a typewritten list before her. She was ticking, as the men called.

Biron guided his uncle past the obstacles and piloted him to a chair. Miss Stretton—who had not looked up until he was seated—rose and took Logan's hand. Her voice had surprise in it. Never before had the cotton-broker visited the library at such an early hour.

"How do you do?" she said. "I am afraid you find us rather in a mess. But we have just had a large consignment of new volumes sent down from the National Library in Bayswater, and we are now checking them in. If you want to talk about anything in particular I will send the men away."

Logan, not habitually a nervous man, did, nevertheless, two things peculiar to the sightless when they find themselves in stress. He took the flesh of his shaven cheek between thumb and finger and plucked at it—and he turned his sightless eyes in the direction of the window as if, both physically and mentally, he desired the help of light. The strongest fibres weaken under affliction. Though he did not know it, he was not the man he had been. What had seemed wise—and comparatively easy—in his study, now made him ill at ease.

"I have a matter of importance to discuss with you," he answered, awkwardly. "It is something which I should like to speak about at once!"



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Miss Stretton stared and glanced at Biron, who made a gesture of being unable to explain. The two men who had been unpacking stopped immediately, looked round and up at the cotton-broker, struck by the curious note in his voice. Miss Stretton made a sign to them. They rose, dusted their trousers-knees, and left the room. Immediately the door had closed on them Logan touched his nephew on the arm.

"And you, George. You can go out, too!"

"Oh, no, Mr. Logan. He can go into the inner room!"

Miss Stretton opened a door in a corner, motioned George Biron through it, closed it on him, and returned to her chair. Logan coughed nervously and again plucked at his cheek. Domineering to his nephew, inflexible as ever in the conduct of his affairs, he found—and was wholly surprised and more than half-ashamed of it—that he weakened in this new situation before this woman whom he could not see. She, herself nervous, waited for him. He coughed again, made a very obvious effort, and began to speak.

"I have come upon an exceedingly delicate matter. I will go direct to the point. These last ten days I have received three Braille-written love-letters. The letters have come to me tucked inside the covers which have brought me my books—from here."

"From here!"

"Yes."

"But that is impossible. There is no one who deals with them—who has access to them—except myself and the two men!"

Logan nodded. He did not answer. He did not know what to say. Miss Stretton stared at him. The eyes are the windows of the soul—always. But in this case the blinds were drawn. Therefore she could not read what was behind them. She sat looking at him. The fact that he had been written to did not strike her as extraordinary. He was so well-preserved, so much more than ordinarily good-looking; he was capable of attracting many and quite young women still. But how had the letters got to him? Who had put them in the covers that were sent to him from this room?

"Wait a minute," she said, presently. "Let me think!"

She clasped her hands, put them on the desk, leaned forward, staring straight ahead. A full minute passed. She could see no solution. She turned round and glanced at his face. He, too, was leaning forward. His sightless eyes were bent on her. In a flash she had comprehension. And in the fraction of a fraction of a second she went red from head to foot.

"You thought it was I," she said. "Mr. Logan, you thought it was I!"

"Yes, Miss Stretton. I did think so. I am not without experience—and strange things have happened to me in the past. I thought, perhaps, you had misunderstood something I might have said in one of my weekly talks!"

She looked at him, angry and resentful; the suggestion burned and seared. The consciousness of her lack of attraction made her doubly sensitive. What did he think of her? Did he credit her as one without pride? To her tongue there rose a protest, scornful, contemptuous, and fierce.

But she did not utter it. After all, the man was blind.

"No, it was not I," she said, quietly. "I am not in love with you—and if I were, I cannot imagine myself doing what—what somebody has done. May I see the letters? Perhaps they will give a clue?"

Logan put his hand to his breast-pocket, drew out his letter-case, withdrew the three Braille documents, and put them into Miss Stretton's hand. She read them and re-read them. Suddenly her lips quivered and she gave a little laugh.

Logan raised his head in surprise.

"You are amused!" he said.

"I am, Mr. Logan."

"Why?"

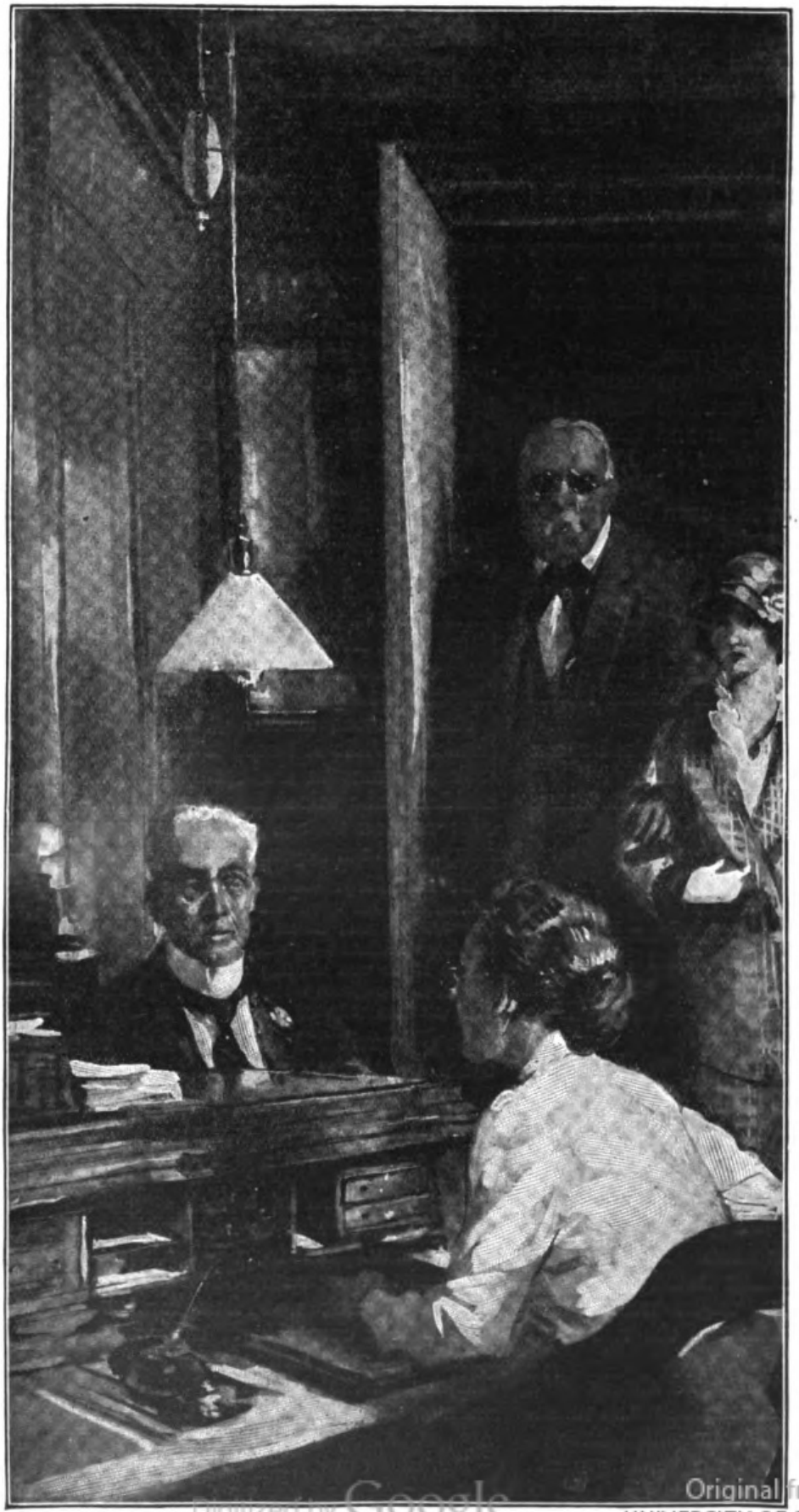
She hesitated. If she answered the question she completely exculpated herself; she took away from him the last incredulousness, those still-remaining doubts which she felt were yet in his mind. On the other hand, if she enlightened him—at this moment—it might spoil other people's lives. A knock at the door saved her. She called out a permission to enter. Two people came in. One of them was a girl, slight, tall, charming, dark, delicious in blue. The man—whose hand was on her arm and who wore smoked glasses—was stalwart, portly, red-faced. It was John Pilkington. He left the girl's arm, felt his way forward, and found Miss Stretton's hand.

"I have come to see you specially," he said. "This mustn't count as a talk. But as I was in Murcester I thought I would come and see you and tell you a good joke!"

Miss Stretton smiled. She had guessed what the joke was. Logan, who had been listening tensely, making ears tell him what eyes might not, suddenly lifted his head.

"Is that Mr. Pilkington?" he asked.

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"THE MAN—WHOSE HAND WAS ON HER ARM AND WHO WORE SMOKED GLASSES—WAS STALWART, PORTLY, RED-FACED. IT WAS JOHN PILKINGTON."

The other blind man looked in the direction from which the voice had come.

"Yes," he answered. "And you are Mr. Logan. I recognize your voice."

Logan rose. His tone was altogether altered. It had become hostile and very cold.

"Then I am in the way. Miss Stretton, I will join my nephew. We can resume our discussion when Mr. Pilkington has gone."

He began to move. Miss Stretton stayed him. She addressed herself to the girl.

"*You* go, Miss Pilkington," she said, quickly. "Go into the inner room. Mr. Logan must stop. He can help your grandfather in the matter about which he has come."

The girl hesitated, twisted her fingers nervously, looked at Miss Stretton, got a glance which insisted; then went, at Miss Stretton's pointing, into the room to which Biron had gone. Logan and Pilkington stood irresolute. They were hardly upon speaking terms. Before their affliction they had been friends, though not

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intimates; since then, as men of substance and experience, they had met perpetually on committees connected with the blind. Both men of strong personality, they had come into frequent conflict by reason of their obstinacy and force.

Miss Stretton closed the door upon Miss Pilkington and came back to her desk and her chair. She was smiling. But she was very nervous. The situation was no common one; she had a blow to strike, deep home. And she hid her anxiousness in a little stilted speech.

"Be seated, gentlemen, if you please."

They obeyed her. Pilkington found the glare from the window hurt him despite his dark glasses; he rose again and shifted his chair. Logan, on the other hand, set his eyes towards the light.

Miss Stretton addressed Logan first.

"Mr. Logan," she began, "let us all assist each other to unravel something which is a mystery to you both. For I am inclined to think that Mr. Pilkington is here upon the same business as yourself. Mr. Pilkington, am I right in thinking that you have come to see me in connection with certain letters written to you in Braille?"

"Perfectly right. That is the joke I spoke of. But how on earth did you know?"

"It does not matter. Have you the letters here?"

"Yes."

"May I see them?"

"Certainly."

Pilkington took three letters from his coat-pocket and put them into Miss Stretton's hand. Two of them were long, ardent, impulsive. The third implored for news. Miss Stretton read it aloud:—

I have had no answer to my letters. I am very worried. It is ten days since I saw you. I could not come up last week. Send me news or I shall think that you do not care for me any more!

Miss Stretton smiled. But she did not read aloud the signature. It would have precipitated matters—and she was not ready yet. Fate had given her a chance to work for other people's happiness. Lack of tact would spoil things. Haste would ruin them. The least precipitation might weaken her influence upon the conduct of the two blind men.

"It is as I thought," she said, slowly. "I can give you a solution soon. In the meantime, let us forget the letters which have so surprised you, and meet on common ground. You both wrote to me about 'Les Misérables.' You think it very great."

"Yes." Logan spoke hurriedly. He had, naturally, no longer any interest in the love-letters; he wished to forget the subject, to cover up his mistake and his shame at it by speaking of something else. "I do think it great. I think it tremendous—the most wonderful, deepest, humanest thing I have ever read."

"And you, Mr. Pilkington?"

"I agree with Mr. Logan. I do not differ from him—for once. I feel that the book reconciles one to one's afflictions. I feel that it is worth while having suffered, to be able to appreciate so great and noble a work."

"Yes." Miss Stretton's forehead wrinkled. "And, Mr. Logan, which part do you like best?"

"The bishop. And Jean Valjean—and old grandfather Gillenormand. He was so human—and so proud."

"But especially Jean Valjean," put in Pilkington, quickly. "It is wonderful how he adored his adopted daughter and gave her up to the man she loved. He was a saint on earth. He is an example to all of us. Victor Hugo must have loved him with all his heart. Do you remember the death-scene in the last chapter but one?"

Miss Stretton nodded. There was a slender silence. While it lasted there was a curious look apparent in the little librarian's eyes. Suddenly she raised her head slightly; her eyes seemed to see something many miles away. And she began, very softly, to quote:—

He had fallen backwards; the light from the candlesticks fell upon him; his white face looked up towards Heaven; he let Cosette and Marius cover his hands with kisses; he was dead.

The night was starless and very dark. Without doubt, in the gloom some mighty angel was standing, with outstretched wings, awaiting the soul.

She ceased. Her voice had trembled; there were tears in those far-looking eyes. Logan coughed. Pilkington blew his nose loudly. The cotton-broker broke silence first.

"The apotheosis of unselfishness," he said. "The exaltation of a former galley-slave; the setting of him in Heaven as a guiding star to man. It is indeed worth while having suffered to have read such a book."

"Yes," took up Pilkington. "He sets love before everything. Do you remember the wonderful sentence uttered by Jean Valjean on his death-bed? 'A heart does want a bone to gnaw!' When I think of my granddaughter——"

"And I of my nephew!"

"One understands what love of youth may mean in the heart of men who are growing old!"

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Again there was a silence. All of them—the two men and the woman—were occupied with their several thoughts. Presently Miss Stretton, with an effort, came back to business and speech. It seemed to her that the moment was ripe at last.

"To go back to the love-letters," she said. "Tell me, Mr. Pilkington, how did they get into your hands?"

He started. The object of his call had been forgotten. So much had he been moved by the immensity of the book which they discussed.

"The love-letters—oh, to be sure, yes. They came in my library books. That is to say, inside the cases in which the books are sent!"

"But that is how mine came!"

"Yes, Mr. Logan, I know. Just one moment. I think I can explain everything to you—if you will let me ask you one or two questions first."

He bowed his acquiescence. Miss Stretton, more than a little nervous, began to tap her foot.

"What time does your library book reach you?"

"In the mornings—between seven and eight."

"Exactly. And, Mr. Pilkington, at what hour does yours arrive?"

"About seven-thirty. Any time before eight."

"And you are down to receive the postman, Mr. Logan?"

"Not invariably. But I have been certainly down of late. In the winter my nephew brings my post up to me. But in this spring weather I am about betimes!"

"That is the same with me," said Pilkington. "In winter I lie late. In summer I get up—to greet the sun!"

"Exactly. And—does it not occur to either of you from whom the love-letters came?"

Logan shook his head. Pilkington uttered a negative. Miss Stretton, gathering courage, ventured on a gentle rebuke.

"You are both of you very dense," she said, smiling. "Let me give you a little light! Mr. Logan, you are aware that your nephew is learning Braille?"

"Yes."

"You are aware, too, that he comes here—to help me—once a week."

Logan started perceptibly. Pilkington gave a cry. Miss Stretton turned to him and pressed the inquiry home.

"And you, Mr. Pilkington," she said. "Your granddaughter comes here—also to assist."

There was no answer. But it was apparent from their faces that both men understood. Their eyes expressed nothing—as is the way with those who are blind. But this only made more eloquent the extreme agitation of their lips.

Miss Stretton forced home her advantage. She did it tactfully and well. She gave them not sympathy, but satisfaction; she treated them as if they were to be warmly congratulated upon what had occurred.

"Oh, you lucky people! What wouldn't I give to be you! How happy; how tremendously happy you must be. What a charming comedy of errors. Your nephew and your granddaughter are in love! They have met here; they have been writing to each other—in the most romantic way. Each has been slipping love-letters into the Braille covers—and by getting up early you have forestalled them and have got the letters instead!"

Miss Stretton ceased a moment. She had, indeed, to walk delicately, to move with the greatest care. One touch of coercion would ruin everything. They needed the lightest hand.

"Well," she continued. "I envy both of you. What a chance to do good in the world! What an opportunity to make them happy—to see them settled in life!"

Logan rose quickly. He pushed away his chair.

"This is impossible," he said. "It is altogether out of the question—as Mr. Pilkington will agree!"

Pilkington rose likewise. He spoke at where he thought that Logan stood.

"I agree with Mr. Logan," he answered. "It is altogether out of the question—as he says."

"And why?" asked Miss Stretton, quietly. "Will you tell me why?"

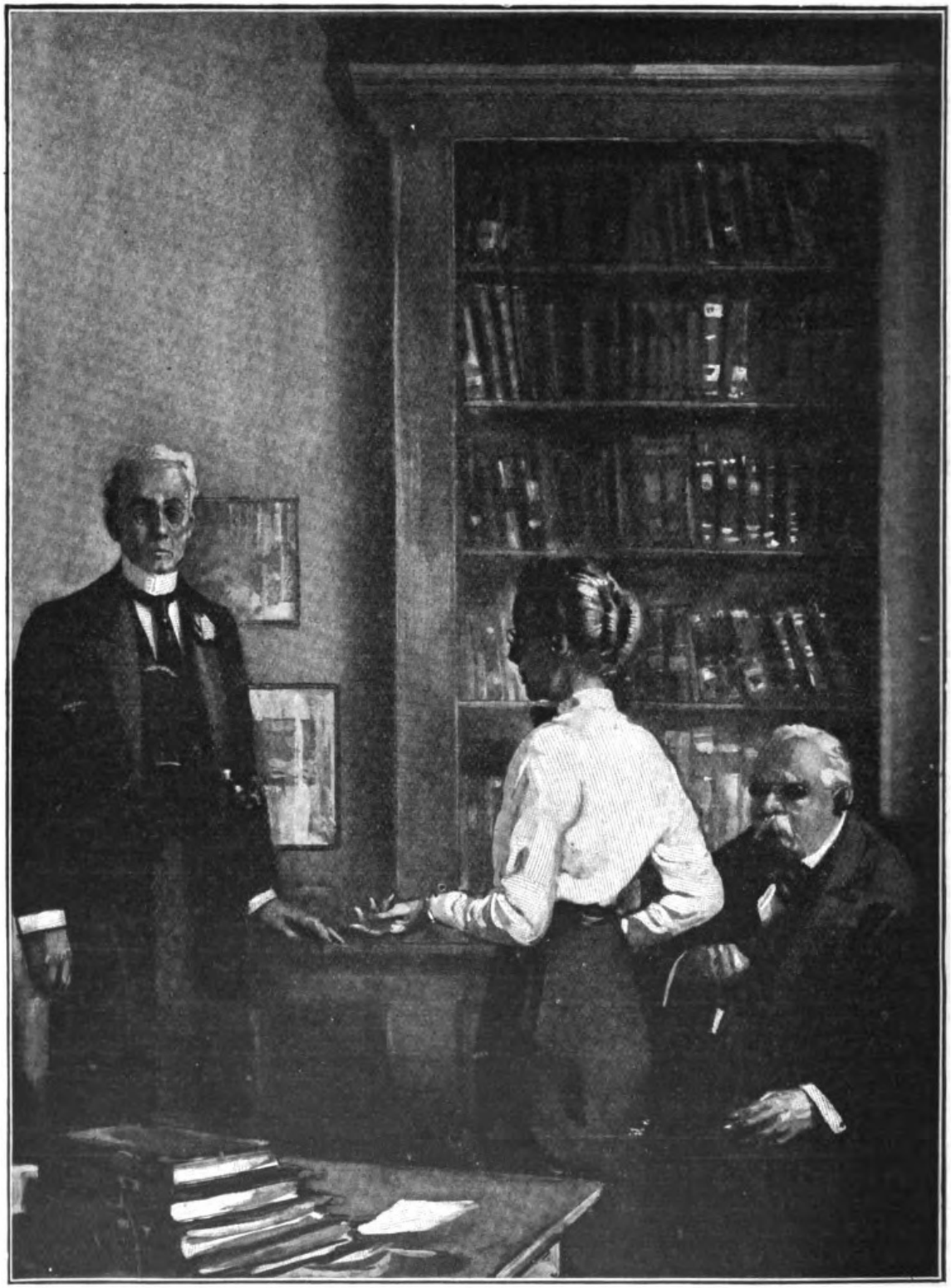
"I cannot part with my nephew. He is absolutely necessary to me. I am fond of him. He is my very eyes and ears!"

"And my granddaughter means everything to me. She is the light of my days. I love her. I could not let her go!"

"And yet—" Miss Stretton leaned forward, her voice, though so quiet, reproached; "and yet you are fond of them. And you have a chance of making them happy—and you will not sacrifice *yourselves!* Is that the only reason that you can give?"

Logan, who had groped his way to the window, spoke with averted face.

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"'THIS IS IMPOSSIBLE,' HE SAID. 'IT IS ALTOGETHER OUT OF THE QUESTION—AS MR. PILKINGTON WILL AGREE!'"

"No," he said. "It is not the only reason. There is another—more important still. I find myself at variance with Mr. Pilkington on every subject—I should not be able to see my nephew if I let him marry this girl."

"And I would not let my granddaughter marry a man who was a nephew of Mr. Logan's. Miss Stretton, you mean well. But this thing cannot go on."

"No," came Logan's insistence, "it cannot. It must be stopped!"

There was a long silence. Miss Stretton

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looked at the two sightless faces, reluctant, yet compelled to wound.

"I wonder," she began, presently, "I wonder if you two are the greatest hypocrites on earth? Anyone who knew you less well than I know you would think that you were!"

She ceased. There was no answer. Her attack, direct and unexpected, had taken away two men's breath. Summoning all her courage, she began again.

"This morning I received two letters. They were each from—as I then believed it—quite sincere men. Each of them thanked me for having recommended them 'Les Misérables'; each was grateful for having read it; each was thankful for his afflictions—that, because of them, he could appreciate so noble, so exalted a book. And now—now that you have been put to the test—you have learned *nothing*. You are worse at heart than the ordinary man who has not suffered. You have thrown your chances away!"

There was still no answer. But her words had got home. Each of the blind men was breathing heavily and hard.

And Miss Stretton began once more.

"Mr. Pilkington, you stand in the place of Jean Valjean. Mr. Logan, you stand, as it were, in old Grandfather Gillenormand's case. But there is this difference. Both of you have a chance of behaving like Jean Valjean. But you are being mean and cruel and selfish. He was big and glorious and great!"

There was still no answer. An inspiration seized Miss Stretton. She got upon her feet.

"Perhaps before now you did not see things quite in this light," she said, gently. "I will leave you to consider what I have said. I will go and wait in the little room with Mary and George."

She went out silently. The glass door closed on her with the faintest little click of the latch. The two blind men were alone.

Not even now did either of them say anything. Logan groped his way back to his chair again. Pilkington, on the other hand, rose. He felt his way past Miss Stretton's chair to the window—as if, though light hurt him, he needed light to see.

For five minutes there was silence. A conflict, profound, tempestuous, raged in each man's breast; each knew that Miss Stretton had spoken truly; each knew where right and justice, truth and duty, lay. Before their affliction it would have been otherwise. Now everything was changed. They had suffered; they had read deeply—after having gained their experience—which is the slowest of the educations, but the greatest and best of all. In their black hours they had learned what most matters in existence. Love. Above all things Love. If they were hard, each would wound cruelly the thing that each loved best. But to be generous meant more suffering, loneliness, isolation, despair.

Logan—who had been sitting, stooped forward—got up again at last. From his voice it had become apparent that the struggle with himself was won.

"I suppose she is right," he said, slowly. "I suppose we are selfish brutes!"

Pilkington turned towards him. His voice, his manner, showed that he, too, was victorious over himself.

"Yes," he answered. "I suppose she was right. Love *is* the only thing that matters. Reading those books has altered me. And you, too, Logan. We are blind. But we have found—light!"

Logan nodded without answering. Pilkington spoke again.

"Logan," he said, "we are what we are. We are the men that circumstance has made us. For our own happiness and our own misery we have got to give way. Don't let us prolong the agony any more than is necessary. Shall we call Miss Stretton — and them—into the room?"

"Yes," said Logan. "Call them all in!"

Pilkington groped round the wall with outstretched fingers; it took him some time to find the door. Logan, who sought it likewise, found the handle, turned it, and put his head into the inner room.

"Miss Stretton," he said, "we wish to speak to you. George, Miss Pilkington, please come in, too."

He drew back to let them enter. Miss Stretton came in first. Then Mary Pilkington appeared. She was very nervous. George Biron, nervous but happy-looking, followed close behind.

The two blind men turned their faces towards each other. Each seemed loth to begin.

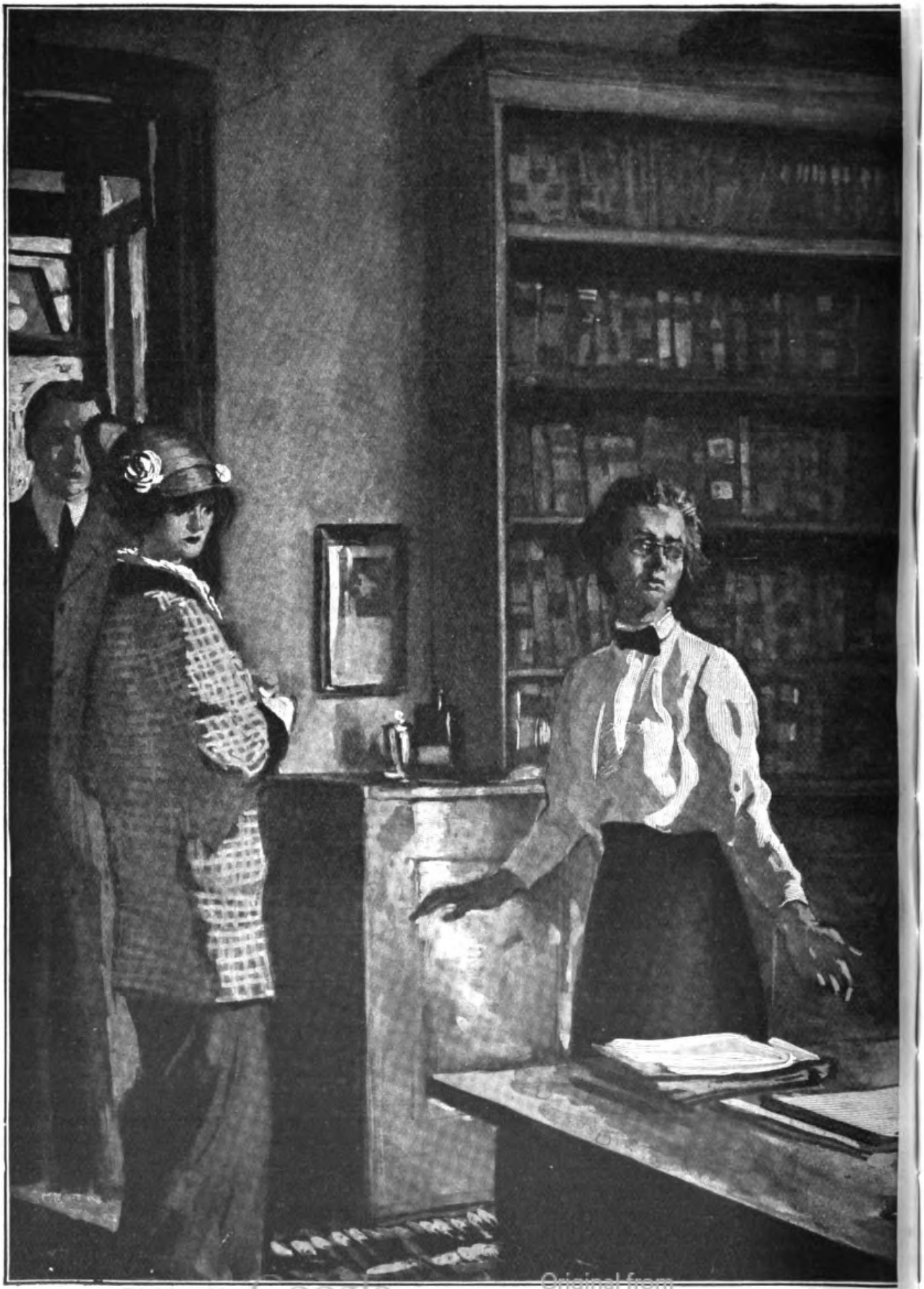
"Pilkington," said Logan, presently, "shall you or I explain?"

"You," said Pilkington. "You—first."

Logan turned towards his nephew. His lips quivered. He began to speak.

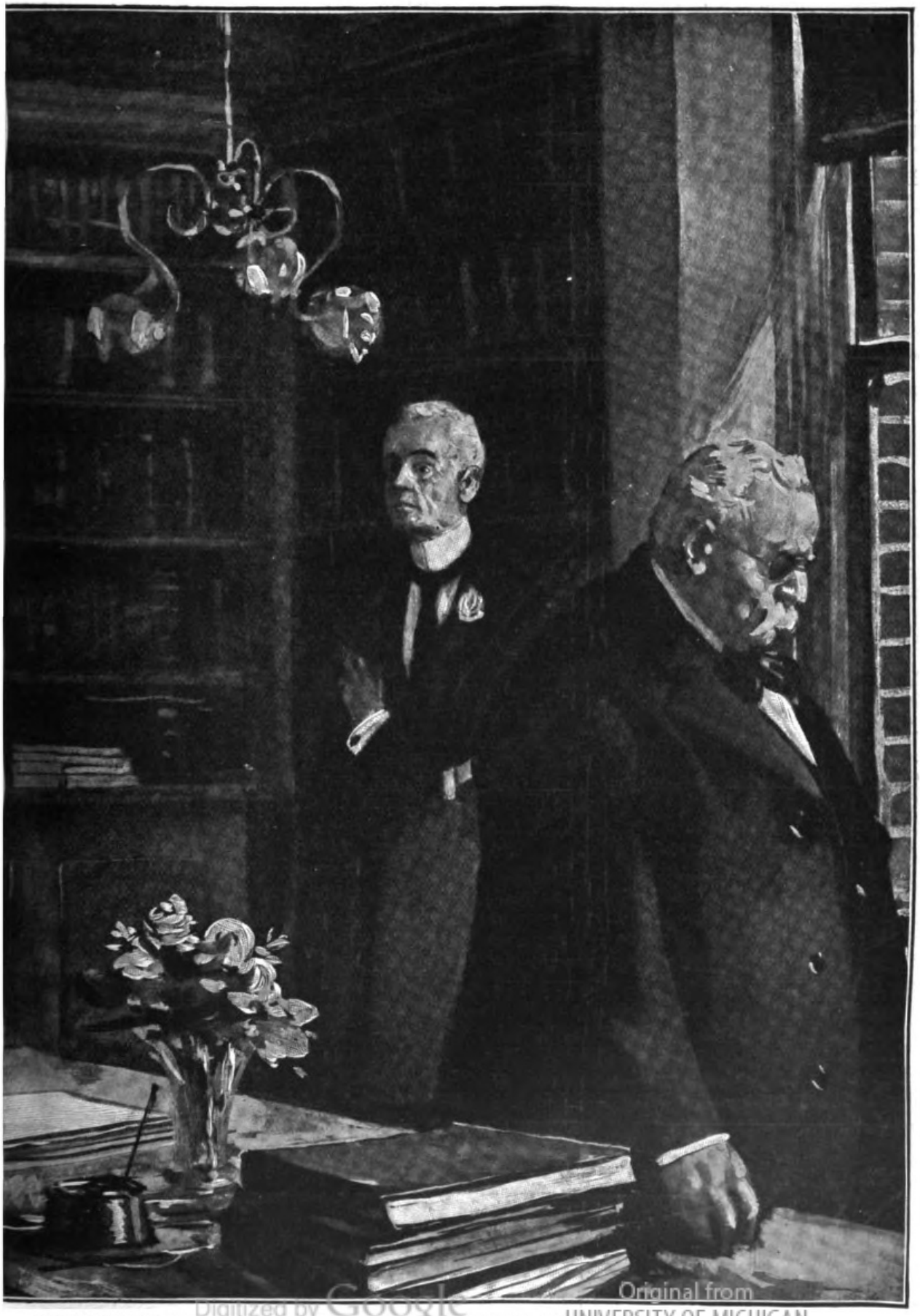
"George," he said, "something has come to my knowledge—and to Mr. Pilkington's knowledge—I dare say you know how. You have been meeting Miss Pilkington here, twice a week, for some months. You have fallen in love with her. You have been writing to her. In other words, you have been carrying on secretly something which you dared not tell!"

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"MISS STRETTON CAUGHT THEIR EYES SIMULTANEOUSLY AND CROSSED

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TOWARDS THE DOOR. SHE BECKONED AND PUSHED THEM OUT OF IT."

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"Yes, sir. I love Miss Pilkington. I want to marry her. And I knew you would never agree."

Logan smiled—that curious blind man's smile—the smile of the lips without the light of the eyes.

"Pilkington," he said, "you will have something to say to your granddaughter?"

"Yes; I have something to ask her. Mary, tell me, you are really in love with this young—with Mr. Biron, here?"

"Yes, grandfather."

"And you, too, anticipated opposition?"

"Yes."

"And you were prepared to run away with him—if I refused?"

"I don't know, grandfather. I don't like to think!"

Pilkington looked again towards where Logan stood.

"We may as well break the news?" he asked.

"Yes."

Pilkington began to speak once more.

"Unless your affection dies with the withdrawal of opposition," he said, "I think I am expressing Mr. Logan's decision in saying that you can get married, and that we will remove any financial obstacles which may stand in your way. The sooner the wedding takes place—the better for us all!"

His voice ended on something between a groan and a sob. His granddaughter came and kissed him with eager words on her lips. George Biron had crossed to his uncle and stood holding his hand. Pilkington could not bear it. He pushed his granddaughter gently away and walked to the window. The two young people stared. Miss Stretton caught their eyes simultaneously and crossed towards the door. She beckoned, pushed them out of it, closed it after them, and came back into the room. Pilkington was at the window with his back to her. Logan had dropped into a chair and was sitting with bowed head and hands between his knees. Neither said anything. There was a long silence. Miss Stretton—who had stood for a full minute—sat down quietly at her desk.

Pilkington heard the movement, and turned round.

"You have won, Miss Stretton," he said, slowly. "You have won!"

Logan looked up for the first time since the two young people had gone out of the room.

"Yes," he said, slowly, "Miss Stretton—and Victor Hugo—have won."

Miss Stretton took her arms off the desk. Her eyes were shining. She looked at one after the other in turn.

"Miss Stretton and even the giant Hugo have only been instruments," she said, gently. "It is you—you two, who have won—the greatest of all possible victories. You have conquered—yourselves!"

There was another pause. In it Pilkington came back to the centre of the room. Logan, hearing him, rose.

"But the victory is Pyrrhic," he said. "We lose all that we had. Love, companionship, youth. We are alone!"

"Yes," said Pilkington, in answer. "We have won. And we are alone!"

"No——" Miss Stretton, who, too, had risen, came to them with shining eyes. "Not alone. They are willing to save you from loneliness—on one condition; I talked it out with them in the little inner room. It is this. You two are to join forces, live together, be friends and companions—and they will live in the house. You will lose nothing. You will keep everything. Youth, companionship, love!"

Neither Logan nor Pilkington answered. They could not. They left speech to this little woman—who had always lived in loneliness, who had never known freedom from worry, comfort, affection, companionship, or love. Her face was shining, irradiated. An immense emotion was mastering her; the tears rolled down her cheeks.

And then, standing before them, she took each of them by the hand. She controlled her voice so marvellously that neither knew that she wept.

"Oh, you poor dears," she said. "I am so glad for you. Love is the only thing that matters. 'A heart *does* want a bone to gnaw!'"

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# RAYMOND BYATT

by A. E. W. Mason

*Illustrated by*

**DUDLEY TENNANT**

DORMAN ROYLE was the oddest hero for such an adventure. For he was naturally of the stolid kind, chary of gesture, firm upon his legs, and very slow of speech. The one change of expression to which his face was liable was a rare deepening of its colour; and until this queer hour of his life, at all events, his mind was a dry and unimaginative piece of mechanism. He followed the profession of a solicitor, and the business he did was like himself, responsible and a trifle heavy. No piratical dashes into the Law Courts in the hope of a great haul were encouraged in his office. Clients as regular in their morals as in their payments alone sought his trustworthy and prosaic advice. Dorman Royle, in a word, was the last man you would think ever to feel the hair lifting upon his scalp or his heart sinking down into a fathomless pit of terror. Yet to him, nevertheless, these sensations happened. It may be that he was specially chosen just because of his unflighty qualities; that, at all events, became his own conviction. Certainly those qualities stood him in good stead. This, however, is surmise. The facts are beyond all dispute.

In June Royle called upon his friend Henry Groome, and explained that he wanted Groome's country house for the summer.

"But it's very lonely," said Groome.

"I don't mind that," replied Dorman Royle, and his face beamed with the smile at once proud and sheepish and a little fatuous which has only meant one thing since the beginning of the world.

"You are going to be married!" said Groome.

"How in the world did you guess?" asked Royle; but it must be supposed that there had been some little note of regret or jealousy in his friend's voice. For the smile died away, and he nodded his head in comprehension.

"Yes, old man. That's the way of it. It's the snapping of the old ties—not a doubt. I shall meet you from time to time at the club in the afternoon, and you will dine with us whenever you care to. But we shall not talk very intimately any more of matters which concern us. We shall be just a trifle on our guard against each other. A woman means that—yes. However, I do what I can. I borrow your house for my honeymoon."

Groome heard the speech with surprise. He had not expected to be understood with so much accuracy. He seemed to be looking at a new man — a stranger, almost certainly no longer his friend, but a man who had put friendship behind him and had reached out and grasped a treasure which had transfigured all his world.

"And whom are you going to marry?" Groome asked; and the answer surprised him still more.

"Ina Fayle."

"Ina—you don't mean——?"

"Yes, I do," said Royle, and the note of his voice was a challenge. But Groome did not take it up. Ina Fayle, of course, he knew by sight and by reputation, as who in London at that time did not? She was a young actress who had not been content to be beautiful.

"Yes, she's a worker," suddenly said Royle. "She has had to work since she was

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sixteen, and what she is sheer industry has made her. Now she is going to give up all her success."

Groome wondered for a moment how in the world she could bring herself to do it. A girl of twenty-three, she had gained already so much success that she must find the world a very pleasant place. She had the joy of doing superbly the work she loved, and a reward besides, tremendous because so immediate, in the adoration of the public, in the great salary after she had been as poor as a rat, and while she was young enough to enjoy every penny of it. Groome was still wondering when once more Royle broke in upon him.

"Yes. It's the sort of renunciation which is much more surprising in a girl than it would be in a man. For the art of the stage is of much the same stuff as a woman's natural life, isn't it? I mean that beauty, grace, the trick of wearing clothes, the power of swift response to another's moods, play the same large part in both. But, you see, she has character, as well as gifts — that's the explanation."

Royle looked at his watch.

"Come and see her, will you?"

"Now?"

"Yes. I promised that I would bring you round," and as he got up from his chair he added: "Oh, by the way, as to your house. I ought to have told you. Ina has a dog—a black spaniel—do you mind?"

"Not a bit," said Groome, and he put on his hat.

The two men walked northwards, Royle at once extremely shy and inordinately proud. They crossed the Marylebone Road into Regent's Park.

"That's her house," said Royle, "the one at the end of the terrace."

Ina Fayle lived with a companion; she was not quite so tall as Groome, who had only seen her upon the stage, expected her to be. He had thought to find a woman a trifle cadaverous and sallow. But she had the clear eyes and complexion of one who goes to bed at eight, and her wealth of fair, shining hair spoke of a resplendent health. She came across the room and took Groome into a window.

"You know Dorman very well, don't you? I want to show you something I have bought for him. Oh, it's nothing—but do you think he will like it?"

She was simple and direct in her manner, with more of the comrade than the woman. She showed Groome a gold cigarette-case.

"Of course it will do. But you have already made him a better wedding-gift than that," said Groome.

"I?" Her forehead puckered in a frown. "What gift?"

"A very remarkable gift of insight, which he never had before."

She coloured a little with pleasure, and her eyes and her voice softened together.

"I am very glad," she answered. "One takes a great deal. It is pleasant to give something in return."

Dorman Royle and Ina Fayle were duly married towards the end of the month, and began their life together in the house which Groome had lent them.

It stood on the top of a hill amongst bare uplands above the valley of the Thames, in a garden of roses and green lawns. But the house was new, and the trees about it small and of Groome's own planting, so that every whisper of wind became a breeze up there, and whistled about the windows. On the other hand, if the wind was still there was nowhere a place more quiet, and the slightest sound which would never have been heard in a street rang out loud with the presumption of a boast. Especially this was so at night. The roar of the great trains racing down to the west cleft the air like thunder; yet your eyes could only see far away down in the river-valley, a tiny line of bright lights winking amongst the trees. Here they stayed for a week, and then Ina showed her husband a telegram summoning her to the bedside of her mother.

"It's not very serious, as you see," she said. "But she wants me, and I think that for a day or two I must go."

She went the next morning. Dorman Royle was left alone, and was thoroughly bored until late on the night before Ina's return. It was, in fact, not far from twelve o'clock when Royle began to be interested. He was sitting in the library when he heard very distinctly through the open window a metallic click. The sound was unmistakable. Somewhere in the garden a gate had been opened and allowed to swing back. What he had heard was the latch catching in the socket. He was interested in his book, and for a moment paid no heed to the sound. But after a second or two he began to wonder who at this hour in that lonely garden had opened a gate. He sat up and listened, but the sound was not repeated. He was inclined to think, clear and distinct though the sound had been, that he had imagined it, when his eyes fell upon Ina's black spaniel. He could no longer

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believe in any delusion of his senses. For the dog had heard the sound too. He had been lying curled up on the varnished boards at the edge of the room, his black shining coat making him invisible to a careless glance. Now he was sitting up, his ears cocked and his eyes upon the window with the extraordinary intentness which dogs display.

Dorman Royle rose from his chair.

"Come," he said, in a whisper, but the spaniel did not move. He sat with his nose raised and the lip of the lower jaw trembling, and his eyes still fixed upon the window. Royle walked softly to the door of the room. It opened on to a hall paved with black and white stone which took up the middle part of the house. Upon his right a door opened on to the drive, on his left another led out to a loggia and a terrace. Royle opened this second door and called again in a whisper to the spaniel:—

"Come, Duke! Seek him out!"

This time the dog obeyed, running swiftly past his legs into the open air. Royle followed. It was a bright, moonlit night, the stars hardly visible in the clear sky. Royle looked out across the broad valley to the forest-covered Chilterns, misty in the distance. Not a breath of wind was stirring; the trees stood as though they had been metal. Three brick steps led from the terrace to the tennis-lawn. On the opposite side of the tennis-lawn a small gate opened on to a paddock. It was this gate which had opened and swung to. But there was no one now on the lawn or in the paddock, and no tree stood near which could shade an intruder. Royle looked at the dog. He stood upon the edge of the terrace staring out over the lawn; Royle knew him to be a good house-dog, yet now not a growl escaped him. He stood waiting to spring forward—yes, but waiting a command to spring forward, and as Royle realized that a strange thought came to him. He had been lonely these last days; hardly a moment had passed but he had been conscious of the absence of Ina; hardly a moment when his heart had not ached for her and called her back. What if he had succeeded? He played with the question as he stood there in the quiet moonlight upon the paved terrace. It was she who had sped across the paddock twelve hours before her time and opened the gate. She had come so eagerly that she had not troubled to close it. She had let it swing sharply to behind her. She was here now, at his side. He reached out a hand to touch her and take hers; and suddenly he became aware that he was no longer playing with a fancy—that he believed it. She was really here, close to him. He could not see her—no. But that was his fault. There was too much dross in Dorman Royle as yet for so supreme a gift. But that would follow—follow with the greater knowledge of her which their life together would bring.

"Come, Duke," he said, and he went back into the house and sat late in the smoking-room, filled with the wonder of this new, strange life that was to be his. A month ago and now! He measured the difference of stature between the Dorman Royle of those days and the Dorman Royle of to-day, and he was sunk in humility and gratitude. But a few hours later that night his mood changed. He waked up in the dark, and, between sleep and consciousness, was aware of some regular, measured movement in the room. In a moment he became wide awake, and understood what had aroused him. The spaniel, lying on the coverlet at the foot of the bed, was thumping with his tail—just as if someone he loved was by him, fondling him. Royle sat up; the bed shook and creaked under him, but the dog paid no heed at all. He went on wagging his tail in the silence and darkness of the room. Someone must be there, and suddenly Royle cried aloud, impetuously, so that he was surprised to hear his own voice:—

"Ina! Ina!" and he listened, with his arms outstretched.

But no answer came at all. It seemed that he had rashly broken a spell. For the dog became still. Royle struck a match and lighted the candle by his bed, straining his eyes to the corners of the room. But there was no one visible.

He blew out the candle and lay down again, and the darkness blotted out all the room. But he could not sleep; and—and—he was very careful not to move. It was not fear which kept him still—though fear came later—but a thrilling expectation. He was on the threshold of a new world. He had been made conscious of it already; now he was to enter it—to see. But he saw nothing. Only in a little while the spaniel's tail began once more to thump gently and regularly upon the bed. It was just as if the dog had waited for him to go to sleep before it once more resumed its invisible communion. This time he spoke to the dog.

"Duke!" he whispered, and he struck a match. The spaniel was lying upon his belly, his neck stretched out, his jaws resting upon his paws. "Duke, what is it?"

The animal raised its head and turned a

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little to one side. The human voice could not have said more clearly :—

"What's the matter? You are interrupting us."

The match burned out between his forefinger and thumb. Royle did not light another. He laid himself down again. But the pleasant fancy born in him upon the moonlit terrace had gone altogether from his thoughts. There was something to him rather sinister in the notion of the dog waiting for him to go to sleep and then, without moving from its place—so certain it was of the neighbourhood of some unseen being to whom it gave allegiance—resuming a strange companionship. He no longer thought of Ina; he was plunged in vague and uncomfortable surmises. No doubt the darkness, the silence of the night, and his own sleeplessness had their effects. He lay in a strange exaltation of spirit, which deepened slowly and gradually into fear. Yes, he was afraid now. He had a sense of danger, all the more alarming because it was reasonless. There were low breathings about his bed; now someone bent over him, now a hand lightly touched the coverlet. He, the most unimpressionable of men, rejoiced when a grey beam of light shot through a chink of the curtain and spread like a fan into the room. He turned over on his side and slept until the sun was high.

In the clear light of a July morning Royle's thoughts took on a more sober colour. None the less, he made a cautious inquiry or two that day from the gardener, and from the shops in the village. The answer in each case was the same.

"The house had no history, no traditions. It had only been built ten years back. There was nothing but a field then where the house now stood. Even the trees had been planted at the time the house was built."

Indeed, the assurance was hardly needed; for the house was new and bright as a hospital. There was hardly a dark corner anywhere, certainly nowhere a harbour for dark thoughts. Royle began to revert to his original fancy; and when that evening his wife returned, he asked her :—

"Last night, just before midnight—what were you doing?"

They were together in a small library upon the first floor, a room with big windows opening upon the side of the house. The night was hot and the windows stood open, and close to one of them at a little table Ina was writing a letter. She looked up with a smile.

"Last night—just before midnight? I was asleep."

"Are you sure?"

Some note of urgency in his voice made her smile waver. It disappeared altogether as she gazed at him.

"Of course," she answered, slowly, "I am sure"; and then, after a little pause and with a slight but a noticeable hesitation, she added: "Why do you ask?"

Dorman Royle crossed over to her side and most unwisely told her :—

"Because at midnight the gate into the paddock was opened and swung to without any hand to touch it. I had been thinking of you, Ina—wanting you—and I wondered."

He spoke half in jest, but there was no jesting reply. For a little while, indeed, Ina did not answer him at all. He was standing just a step behind her as she sat at the table in the window, so that he could not see her face. But her body stiffened.

"It must have been a delusion," she said, and he walked forward and sat down in a chair by the table facing her.

"If so, it was a delusion which the dog shared."

She did not change her attitude; she did not stir. From head to foot she sat as though carved in stone. Nor did her face tell him anything. It became a mask; it seemed to him that she forced all expression out of it, by some miracle of self-command. But her eyes shone more than usually big, more than usually luminous; and they held their secret too, if they had a secret to hold. Then she leaned forward and touched his sleeve.

"Tell me!" she said, and she had trouble to find her voice; and, having found it, she could not keep it steady.

"I am sorry, Ina," he said. "You are frightened. I should not have said a word."

"But you have," she replied. "Now I must know the rest."

He told her all that there was to tell. Reduced to the simple terms of narrative, the story sounded, even to him, thin and unconvincing. There was so little of fact and event, so much of suggestion and vague emotion. But his recollection was still vivid, and something of the queer terror which he had felt as he had lain in the darkness was expressed in his aspect and in the vibrations of his voice. So, at all events, he judged. For he had almost expected her to laugh at the solemnity of his manner, and yet Ina did not so much as smile. She listened without even astonishment, paying close heed to every word, now and then nodding her head in assent, but never interrupting. He was vaguely reminded of clients listening to his

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"ROYLE CROSSED OVER TO HER SIDE AND MOST UNWISELY TOLD HER."

advice in some grave crisis of their affairs. But when he had finished she made no comment. She just sat still and rigid, gazing at him with baffling and inscrutable eyes.

Dorman Royle rose. "So it wasn't you, Ina, who returned last night?" he said.

"No," she answered, in a voice which was low, but now quite clear and steady. "I slept soundly last night—much more soundly than I usually do."

"That's strange," said Royle.

"I don't think so," Ina answered. "I think it follows. Yes, that's all of a piece with your story, don't you see?"

Dorman Royle sprang up, and at his abrupt movement his wife's face flashed into life and fear.

"What are you saying?" he cried, and she shrank as if she realized now what a dangerous phrase she had allowed her lips to utter.

"Nothing, nothing!" she exclaimed, and she set herself obstinately to her letter.

Royle looked at the clock.

"It's late," he said. "I'll take the dog out for a run."

He went downstairs and out at the front of the house. To-night the air was mistier, and the moon sailed through a fleece of clouds. Royle walked to a gate on the edge of the hill. It may have been a quarter of an hour before he whistled to the dog and turned back to the house. From the gate to the house was perhaps a hundred yards, and as he walked back first one, then another, of the windows of the library upon the first floor came within his view. These windows stood wide open to the night and showed him, as in a miniature, this and that corner of the room, the bookcases, the lamps upon the tables, and the top-rails of the chair-backs, small but very clear. The one window which he could not as yet see at all was that in which his wife sat. For it was at the far end of the room and almost over the front door. Royle came within view of it at last, and stopped dead. He gazed at the window with amazement. Ina was still sitting at the writing-table in the window, but she was no longer alone. Just where he himself had stood a few minutes before, a step behind her shoulder, another man was now standing—a man with a strong, rather square, dark face, under a mane of black hair. He wore a dinner-jacket and a

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black tie, and he was bending forward and talking to Ina very earnestly. Ina herself sat with her hands pressed upon her face and her body huddled in her chair, not answering, but beaten down by the earnestness of the stranger's pleading. Thus they appeared within the frame of the window, both extraordinarily distinct to Royle watching outside there in the darkness. He could see the muscles working in the stranger's face and the twitching of Ina's hands, but he could hear nothing. The man was speaking in too low a voice.

Royle did not move.

"But I know the man," he was saying to himself. "I have seen him, at all events. Where? Where?" And suddenly he remembered. It was at the time of a General Election. He had arrived at King's Cross Station from Scotland late one night, and, walking along the Marylebone Road, he had been attracted by a throng of people standing about a lamp-post, and above the throng the head and shoulders of a man addressing it had been thrown into a clear light. He had stopped for a moment to listen; he had asked a question of his neighbour. Yes, the speaker was one of the candidates, and he was the man who now stood by Ina's side.

Royle tried to remember the name, but he could not. Then he began to wonder whence the stranger had come. It was a good two miles to the village. How, too, had he managed to get into the house? The servants had gone to bed an hour before Royle had come out. The hall-door stood open now. He had left it open. The man must have been waiting some such opportunity. Such a passion of anger and jealousy flamed up in Royle as he had never known. He ran into the hall and shot the bolts. He hurried up the stairs and flung open the door. Ina was still sitting at the table, but she had withdrawn her hands from her face, and, but for her, the room was empty.

"Ina!" he cried, and she turned to him. Her face was quiet, her eyes steady; there was a smile upon her lips.

"Yes?"

She sat just as he had left her. Looking at her in his bewilderment, he almost came to believe that his eyes had tricked him, that thus she had sat all this while. Almost! For the violence of his cry had been unmistakable, and she did not ask for the reason of it. He was out of breath, too, his face no doubt disordered; yet she put no question; she sat and smiled—tenderly. Yes, that was the word. Dorman Royle stood in front of her. It seemed to him that his happiness was crumbling down in ruins about him.

"Ina!" he repeated, and the dog barked for admission underneath the window. The current of his thoughts was altered by the sound. His passion fell away from him. It seemed to him that he dived under ice.

"Ina!"

He sat quietly down in the chair on the other side of that table.

"You have had that dog some time?" he asked.

"Yes."

"How did you get it?"

The answer came quite steadily, but slowly, and after a long silence.

"A friend gave it to me."

"Who?"

There was no longer any smile upon the girl's face. Nor, on the other hand, was there any fear. Her eyes never for a second wavered from his.

"Why do you ask?"

"I am curious," replied Royle. "Who?"

"Raymond Byatt."

The name conveyed nothing to Royle. He did not even recollect it. But he spoke as if it were quite familiar to him.

"Raymond Byatt? Didn't he stand for Parliament once in Marylebone?"

"Yes. He was defeated."

Royle rose from his chair.

"Well, I had better go down and let the dog in," he said, and he went to the door, where he turned to her again.

"But if he's a friend of yours, you should ask him down," he remarked. Ina drew herself up in her chair, her hands clinging to the arms of it.

"He killed himself a fortnight ago."

The answer turned Royle into a figure of stone. The two people stared at one another across the room in a dreadful silence; and it seemed as if, having once spoken, Ina was forced by some terrible burden of anguish to speak yet more.

"Yes," she continued in a whisper, "a week before we married."

"Did you care for him?"

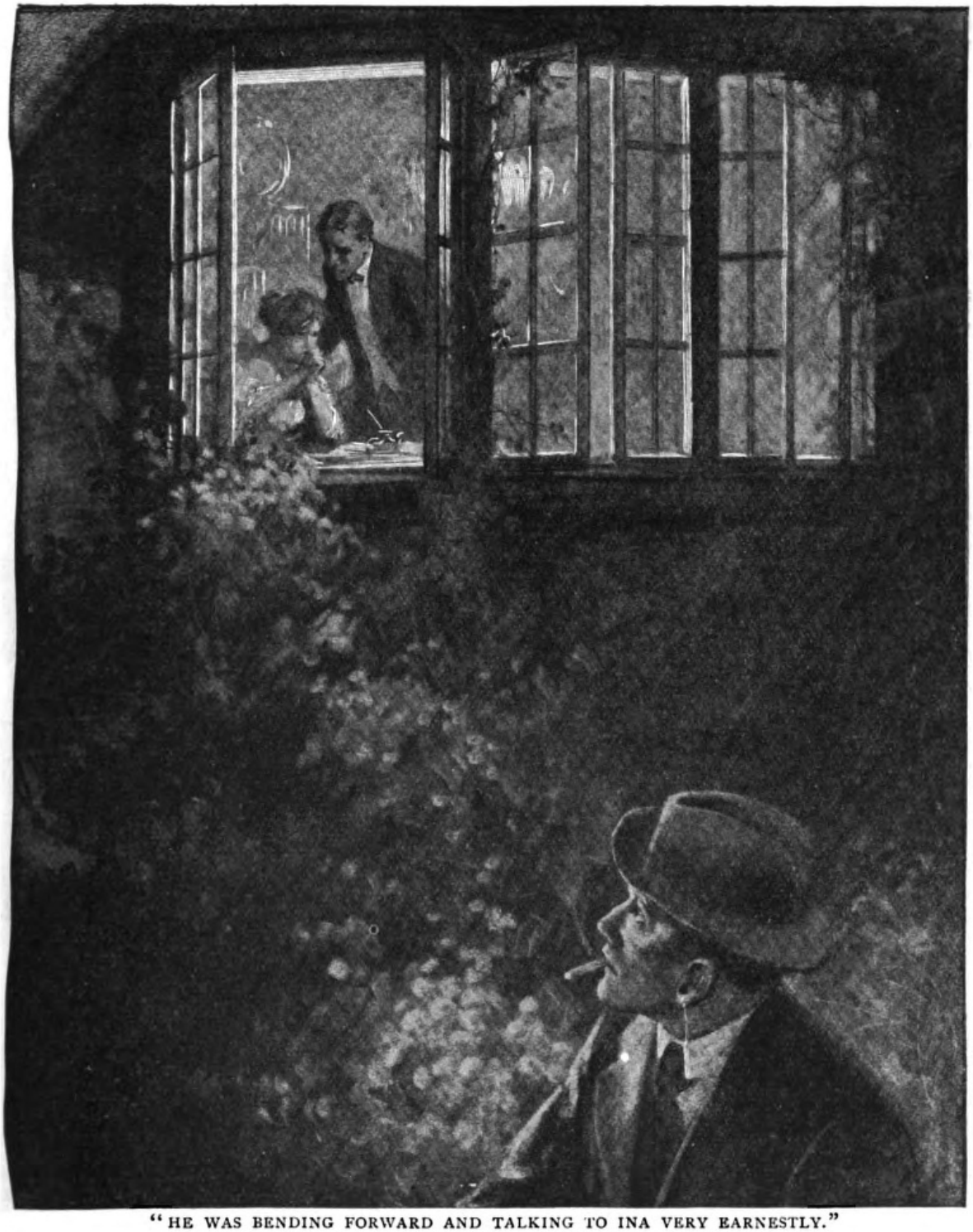
Ina shook her head.

"Never."

There were words upon the tip of Royle's tongue—words of bitterness:—

"It was he who came back last night. He came back for you. He was with you to-night—the moment after I left you. I saw him." But he knew they would be irrevocable words, and with an effort he held his tongue. He went downstairs and let the dog in.

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"HE WAS BENDING FORWARD AND TALKING TO INA VERY EARNESTLY."

When he returned to the library Ina was standing up.

"I'll go to bed," she said, and her voice pleaded for silence. "I am tired. I have had a long journey"; and he let her go without a word.

He sat late himself, wondering what in the morning he should do. The house had become horrible to him. And unless Ina told him all there was to tell, how could they go on side by side anywhere? When he went upstairs Ina was in bed and asleep. He left the door wide open between her room and his and turned in himself. But he slept lightly, and at some time that night, whilst it was still dark, he was roused to wakefulness. A light was burning in his wife's room, and through the doorway he could see her. She had in her hand the glass of water which usually stood on a little table beside her bed, and she was measuring out into it from a bottle some crystals. He knew that they

were chloral crystals, for, since she slept badly, she always kept them by her. He watched her shaking out the dose, and as he watched such a fear clutched at his heart as made all the other terrors of that night pale and of no account. Ina was measuring out deliberately enough chloral into that tumbler of water to kill a company. Very cautiously he drew himself up in his bed. He heard the girl stifle a sob, and as she waited for the crystals to dissolve her face took on a look of grief and despair which he had never in his life seen before. He sprang out of bed, and in an instant was at her side. With a cry Ina raised the glass to her lips, but his hand was already upon her wrist.

"Let me go!" she cried, and she struggled to free herself. But he took the glass from her, and suddenly all her self-command gave way in a passion of tears. She became a frightened child. Her hands sought him, she hid her face from him, and she would not let him go.

"Ina," he whispered, "what were you doing?"

"I was following," she said. "I had to. He stands by me, always, commanding me." And she shook like one in a fever.

"Good God!" he cried.

"Oh, I have fought," she sobbed, "but he's winning. Yes, that's the truth. Sooner or later I shall have to follow."

"Tell me everything," said Royle.

"No."

But he held her close within the comfort of his arms and wrestled for her and for himself. Gradually the story was told to him in broken sentences and with long silences between them, during which she lay in his clasp and shivered.

"He wanted me to marry him. But I wouldn't. He had a sort of power over me—the power of a bully who cares very much," she said; and a little later she gave the strangest glimpse of the man. He would hardly have believed it; but he had seen the man, and the story fitted him.

"I was in Paris for a few days—alone with my maid. I went to see a play which was to be translated for me. He was in the same hotel, quite alone as I was. It was after I had kept on refusing him. He seemed horribly lonely—that was part of his power. I never saw anyone who lived so completely in loneliness. He was shut away in it as if in some prison of glass through which you could see but not hear. It made him tragic—pitiful. I went up to him in the lounge and asked if we couldn't be just friends, since we were both there alone. You'll never imagine what he did. He stared at me without answering at all. He just walked away and went to the hotel manager. He asked him how it was that he allowed women in his hotel who came up and spoke to strangers."

"Ina—he didn't!" cried Royle.

"He did. Luckily the manager knew me. And that night, though he wouldn't speak to me in the lounge, he wrote me a terrible letter. Then, when you and I were engaged, he killed himself—just a week before we married. He tried to do it twice. He went down to an hotel at Aylesbury and sat up all night, trying to do it. But the morning came and he had failed. The servant who called him found him sitting at the writing-table in his bedroom at which he had left him the night before; and all night he had written not one word. Next day he went to another hotel on the South Coast, and all that night he waited. But in the morning—after he had been called—quite suddenly he found the courage—yes——" and Ina's voice trailed away into silence. In a little while she began again.

"Ever since he has been at my side, saying 'I did it because of you. You must follow.' There was the chloral always ready. I found myself night after night, when you were asleep, reaching out my hand obediently towards it—towards it——"

"Except last night," Royle interrupted, suddenly finding at last the explanation of some words of hers which had puzzled him, "when he came here."

"And I slept soundly in consequence," she agreed. "Yes. But to-night—if you hadn't been here—I should have obeyed altogether."

"But I am here," said Royle, gently; and, looking up, he saw that the morning had come. He rose and pulled aside the curtains so that the clear light flooded the room.

"Ina, do something for me," he pleaded, and she understood. She took the bottle of crystals, poured them into the basin, and set the tap running.

"Stay with me," she said. "Now that I have told you I believe that I shall sleep, and sleep without fear. When you came into the room before I was only pretending."

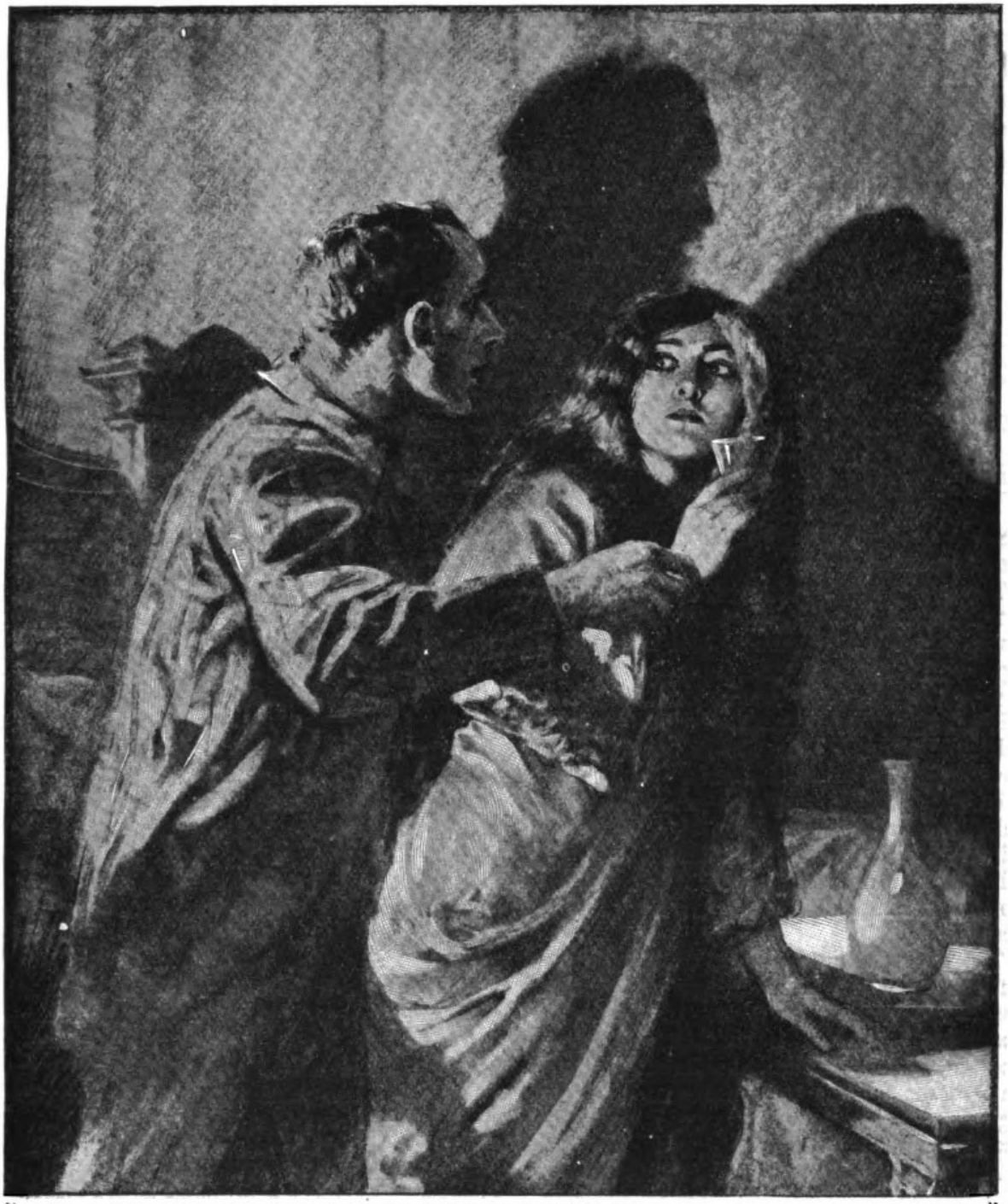
She nestled down, and this time she did sleep. It seemed to Royle that the victory was won.

Some months later, however, a client talking over his affairs with Royle in his private office mentioned Raymond Byatt's name. Royle leaned forward with a start.

"You knew that man?" he asked.

"Yes," replied the client with a laugh.

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"WITH A CRY INA RAISED THE GLASS TO HER LIPS, BUT HIS HAND WAS ALREADY UPON HER WRIST."

"He forged my name for a thousand pounds—and not mine alone. He was clever with his pen. But he came to the end of his tether at last. He saved himself from penal servitude by blowing his brains out."

Royle jumped out of his chair.

"Is that true?"

"Absolutely."

And Royle sat down suddenly.

"That's the best piece of news I have ever had in my life," he cried. Now for a sure thing the victory was his. He went home that evening in the highest spirits.

"What do you think, Ina, I discovered to-day?" he blurted out. "You'll be as glad to hear as I was. Raymond Byatt didn't kill himself for you, after all. He did it to save himself from a prosecution for forgery."

There was a moment's silence, and then Ina replied:—

"Indeed!" and that was all. But Dorman Royle, to his perplexity, detected a certain unexpected iciness in her voice. Somehow that new insight which Groome had discovered in him had on this evening failed him altogether.

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# Some Clever Detective Feats.

## By GEO. R. SIMS.

### Illustrated by Rex Osborne.

II.

THE detective of nineteenth-century fiction and nineteenth-century drama was an adept in the art of disguise. It was by disguising himself that he was able to see things the police were not wanted to see, and to hear things the police were not wanted to hear.

The situation in which the criminal investigator in "The Ticket-of-Leave Man," disguised as a drunken labourer asleep in a tap-room, was able to spring up at the psychological moment and announce himself as "Hawkshaw, the detective," was for quite half a century *the* situation in the detective novel and in the detective play.

In the twentieth-century fiction the disguised detective gave way to the brainy criminal investigator, who arrived at the solution of a mystery by a happy combination of minute observation and logical deduction.

The detective in real life, though he frequently possesses the power of minute observation and is quite capable of logical deduction, relies to a considerable extent upon his knowledge of the habits of criminals, and he more often than not gets upon the right track by "acting upon information received."

But for the purpose of keeping observation and mixing in company where valuable information is likely to be obtained, the real detective occasionally disguises himself.

He may assume the garb and appearance of a working man and shoulder a bag of tools. He may, in immaculate evening-dress, mingle with the guests at a society function. He may, in the ragged, weather-stained clothes of a tramp, sit round the kitchen fire in a common lodging-house.

On one memorable occasion my friend Inspector Wensley, of Leman Street, whose capture of Stinie Morrison was a remarkably clever detective feat, disguised himself as a guardsman, in order to get into an East-end gambling-hell which was known to be frequented by soldiers.

The inspector had good reason to remember the occasion, for when, simultaneously with giving the signal for the police to enter, he seized the money on the table, he was mistaken for an ordinary thief, and, being clothed in the short jacket and tight trousers of the guardsman, the blows rained upon him with canes and sticks were exceedingly effective.

A London detective, during the Jack-the-Ripper scare, walked the streets of Whitechapel night after night disguised as a woman.

The disguise and the assumption of a false social position are not such common expedients in English investigation as they are in the French. It is not often that an English detective will, in order to elucidate a mystery, obtain a menial position in the house of a suspected person.

That was a feat performed with remarkable success some years ago by Jaume, when he was Chief Inspector under Goron, of the Paris Sûreté.

It was by disguising himself as a gardener and obtaining employment in the house of the suspect that the clever French detective brought a criminal to justice who had been left for over two years after his wife's mysterious death unmolested by the law.

One of the most interesting cases of disguise for the purpose of unravelling a criminal mystery is part of the romance of the famous jewel robbery of which Messrs. London and Rider were the victims a good many years ago.

An elegantly-dressed man drove up in a brougham to the establishment. He gave his name as Captain ——, and said that he had taken a furnished house in Upper Berkeley Street for the season, and he had been recommended to Messrs. London and Rider for some jewellery which he wished to buy.

He stated that his wife, who was an invalid, was unable to accompany him, but he had promised her a diamond necklace and some

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pearls for her birthday. As he would like her to make the choice herself, he would be glad if Messrs. London and Rider would send their assistant that afternoon to the house in Upper Berkeley Street with some samples, in order that his wife might make a selection.

The unsuspecting jewellers, satisfied with the appearance of their new client and the address he had given, sent their assistant that afternoon, and the assistant had with him a bag containing a choice assortment of diamond and pearl ornaments, and other valuable jewels.

When the jeweller knocked at the door, it was opened by the Captain, who appeared surprised.

"You are from London and Rider's, I suppose? Well, that's lucky. I was just going out. I didn't expect you so soon. Come upstairs into the drawing-room, and I will let my wife know that you are here."

The jeweller's assistant went up to the drawing-room, where the Captain left him and went into an inner room to let his wife know that the jewels had arrived.

The assistant opened his bag and spread the contents upon the table in order to display them to greater advantage.

While he was doing this, sitting in the chair which had been placed for him by the Captain, and which left him with his back to the folding doors through which the Captain had disappeared, the jeweller's assistant felt himself suddenly gripped from behind. In another instant a handkerchief soaked with chloroform was thrust over his mouth and nostrils, and he was tightly bound with a thick cord. The person who held the handkerchief over his mouth with one hand had the other over the man's eyes, so that he could see nothing of his aggressors; but he knew that one of his assailants was a woman.

Stupefied by the chloroform, and with his arms and legs safely secured, he was carried to a couch and laid upon it, and a thick antimacassar was then flung over his head, so that it was impossible for him to see anything that went on in the room.

When, gradually, he recovered from his bewilderment, to which the attempt at chloroforming had contributed, he managed with some difficulty to get rid of his bonds.

He rushed down into the street and raised the alarm. The police came in, but the house was deserted. The jewels had disappeared, and so had the Captain and his wife.

While the police were in the house a maid-servant entered it. She had been sent out, she said, by her mistress with a letter to an address at Kilburn, which she had failed to find. The girl had, of course, been sent to a bogus address in order to get rid of her while the robbery was carried out.

Scotland Yard set to work, and discovered that the house had been taken from *bonâ-fide* house agents, who had received a proper reference. The reference, it was afterwards discovered, had been written by the man himself, who had managed to be at the house when the estate agents' letter was received, and he had taken possession of it.

The only clue to the identity of the thieves was furnished by the maid, who had been "let with the house." She was able to describe her temporary mistress as a short, plump, pretty little woman, with blue eyes and golden hair.

Of her temporary master her description was less satisfactory from the police point of view. She described him as fair and good-looking and of ordinary height. She had not noticed anything peculiar in his form or his features.

It was by a clever impersonation, worthy of what used to be known as "genteel comedy," that a well-known Scotland Yard detective succeeded in running the guilty couple to earth, but the woman had been tried at the Old Bailey and acquitted before the law succeeded in laying an arresting hand on the shoulder of her husband.

The detective who had the case in hand and put the inquiry in train received information from all parts of England concerning a pretty little woman with blue eyes and golden hair, who was honouring the neighbourhood with her presence.

The detective and the maid went together to at least a dozen towns from which information had been forwarded, but in every case without success. The maid was positive that not one of the women suspected by the informants of the police was the lady of Upper Berkeley Street.

The maid eventually got a situation in the North of Scotland, and it was no longer considered desirable to take her about the country on wild-goose chases.

But one day the Yard received information that a short, plump, pretty little woman, with blue eyes and golden hair, was living in apartments in Leamington, that she had a baby with her, and a husband abroad.

The landlady of the apartment-house sent the information, and added that her lodger always went to the post-office for her letters; none ever came to the house.

The detective thought that the Leamington

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story was worth looking into. He went to Leamington and took apartments in the same house, posing as a gentleman who had recently returned from India, and had come to Leamington for his health.

He made the acquaintance of the pretty little grass widow, met her every morning on her favourite promenade or in the gardens, and succeeded in making himself generally agreeable.

He made himself so very agreeable that the pretty little woman eventually confided her troubles to him. She had a husband who was in Belgium, and she did not know when he was likely to come back, but she wrote him almost every day.

The detective was now pretty sure that he was "making good," and so one morning when the lady, whose name was Mrs. Tarpey, had gone out and left the baby in charge of the landlady, he presented his credentials to the landlady and invited her to assist the interests of justice by helping him to make a search of Mrs. Tarpey's apartments.

Nothing suspicious was found at first, not a letter or a document that could be of the slightest assistance as a clue.

The detective was about to retire crestfallen, when, on looking over a drawer which apparently contained only a few aids to feminine vanity, he came upon a bottle labelled "Chloroform," and it was only half-full.

The chloroform, the husband abroad, and the letters sent to the post-office, added to the fact that the young woman was short, plump, and pretty, had blue eyes and golden hair, appeared to be conclusive.

When the grass widow returned to her temporary home she was gently greeted by her admirer, who informed her that he was a police officer, and that he should arrest her on suspicion of being concerned in the jewel robbery in Upper Berkeley Street.

Mrs. Tarpey was brought to London and eventually tried at the Old Bailey. She made a pitiful figure in the dock, being permitted during the course of the trial to have her baby with her, and a sympathetic jury acquitted her on the grounds that she was acting under her husband's orders.

She left the court smiling, and immediately took a cab and drove to a house in the North of London. The detective, who "had an idea," followed in another cab.

Mrs. Tarpey entered the house, went upstairs to a room on the first floor, and was being affectionately embraced by a gentleman, when the tender romance of the restoration of a wife to her husband's arms was rudely interrupted by the entrance of the lady's former admirer, who, touching the gentleman on the shoulder, said: "John Tarpey, I want you."

The husband, learning of his wife's predicament, had returned from the Continent, where he had disposed of the jewels, and had remained in London awaiting the result of the trial at the Old Bailey.

During the trial he had managed to communicate his address to her.

John Tarpey was less fortunate than his wife. He was sentenced to seven years' penal servitude, and his capture and conviction were due to the clever feat of the detective who had made himself so agreeable to the little grass widow at Leamington.

A mystery which for years had caused the chiefs at Scotland Yard a considerable amount of anxiety was solved by a remarkably clever bit of work on the part of Detective-Inspector Sweeney, of the C.I.D.

In 1884 and 1885 a series of dynamite outrages took place in London, and these were known to be largely the work of emissaries of the Clan na Gael.

It is the business of the Special Branch at the Yard to locate all persons known to be in league with Anarchists and Revolutionaries, or members of secret organizations carrying on what is euphemistically termed "an active propaganda."

At the time when a number of Irish-American Fenians were over here, and bombs and infernal machines were almost daily events, two emissaries of the Clan na Gael, Captain Lomasney and John Fleming, disappeared from their usual haunts. No trace of them could be found. They were believed to have been concerned in an attempt to blow up London Bridge.

Two men, on a misty December afternoon, hired a boat, and two men in a boat had been seen rowing in the direction of London Bridge shortly before a terrific explosion occurred, and it was found that a big hole had been blown in one of the buttresses of London Bridge.

It was evident, from the situation of the hole, that the mischief had been done from a boat. But after the explosion no boat was discovered near the scene, and it was believed that the men had succeeded in getting away unobserved.

The Yard was pretty certain that the outrage was the work of two agents of the Clan na Gael, Lomasney and Fleming, and the officials were very anxious to know where these men were, in order that they might be

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"THE TENDER ROMANCE OF THE RESTORATION OF A WIFE TO HER HUSBAND'S ARMS WAS RUDELY INTERRUPTED BY THE ENTRANCE OF THE LADY'S FORMER ADMIRER."

shadowed and, directly sufficient evidence had been acquired against them, arrested.

But though the officers told off to investigate the affair searched in every direction, no trace of them could be found.

Two or three years after the affair, Sweeney,

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who had been indefatigable in his efforts to solve the mystery of their disappearance, heard that Fleming had a married sister who had been living for some years in a certain street in the Borough.

How was he to get into communication with her and inquire about her brother without arousing her suspicions? He thought out an ingenious plan.

He had a visiting-card printed with the name of John Fleming on it. He soiled and crumpled the card and made it look as though he had carried it about with him for years. Then underneath it he wrote in pencil the address at which Fleming's sister was living.

Armed with this, and having made himself look like a traveller from the other side, he called at the house, and the woman he was in search of came to the door.

The detective, with a slight American accent, inquired if Mr. Fleming lived there.

The woman looked at him with a grave expression on her face. "Did you know Mr. Fleming?" she asked.

"Oh, yes; I have come across with him once or twice from America. The last time was two or three years ago. We became friends on the boat, and he gave me his card and this address, which I wrote upon it. 'You will always be able to hear of me at that address,' he said, and, being in England, I thought I'd call. I'd like to see him and have a chat, if I can, before I go back to New York."

The sister took the card and looked at it, and then burst into tears.

"Ah," she sobbed, "I'm afraid you'll never see him again. He went away nearly three years ago and never came back; and he's never written to me, and I've had no news of him at all. That's his coat hanging behind the door, just as he left it, and his box is upstairs. He must be dead, or he would have written to me or come back for his box before this."

The next morning two officers from Scotland Yard called at the house and took possession of the coat and the box. In the box documents were found which proved beyond a doubt that Fleming and Lomasney had arranged to blow up London Bridge.

The fact that neither of the men had been seen by anyone after the explosion, and that Fleming had left a box containing incriminating documents at his sister's house and had never attempted to remove it, pointed conclusively to the fact that the boat itself must have been wrecked by the explosion and gone down with its occupants.

The clever feat of Detective-Inspector Sweeney had solved the mystery of the missing agents of the Clan na Gael, and relieved the intense anxiety of Scotland Yard as to their whereabouts.

A year or two ago I was walking at dead of night through a certain rather notorious street in North-west London with a well-known officer of the C.I.D. As we were passing a house the detective drew my attention to it, and pointed to a light which was burning dimly in the front room in the basement. You had to go down the area steps in order to reach the basement door, and the detective leaned against the railings as he pointed below.

"It was out of that door and up these steps," he said, "that Albert Milsom and Henry Fowler came with a set of burglar's tools and a toy lantern in their pockets when they went to commit the robbery at Muswell Hill that ended in murder. It was the toy lantern they carried that helped me to bring them to the gallows."

The detective who was my companion was Detective-Sergeant Burrell, and that night as we walked along he told me the story of the clever detective feat which solved a crime which was for a considerable time known as "The Mystery of Muswell Hill."

Two burglars broke one night into a lonely villa at Muswell Hill. The occupant was an elderly man who lived quite alone, and was supposed to have a quantity of money hoarded on the premises.

The old gentleman, hearing a noise, came down from his bedroom, and was attacked by the burglars and killed.

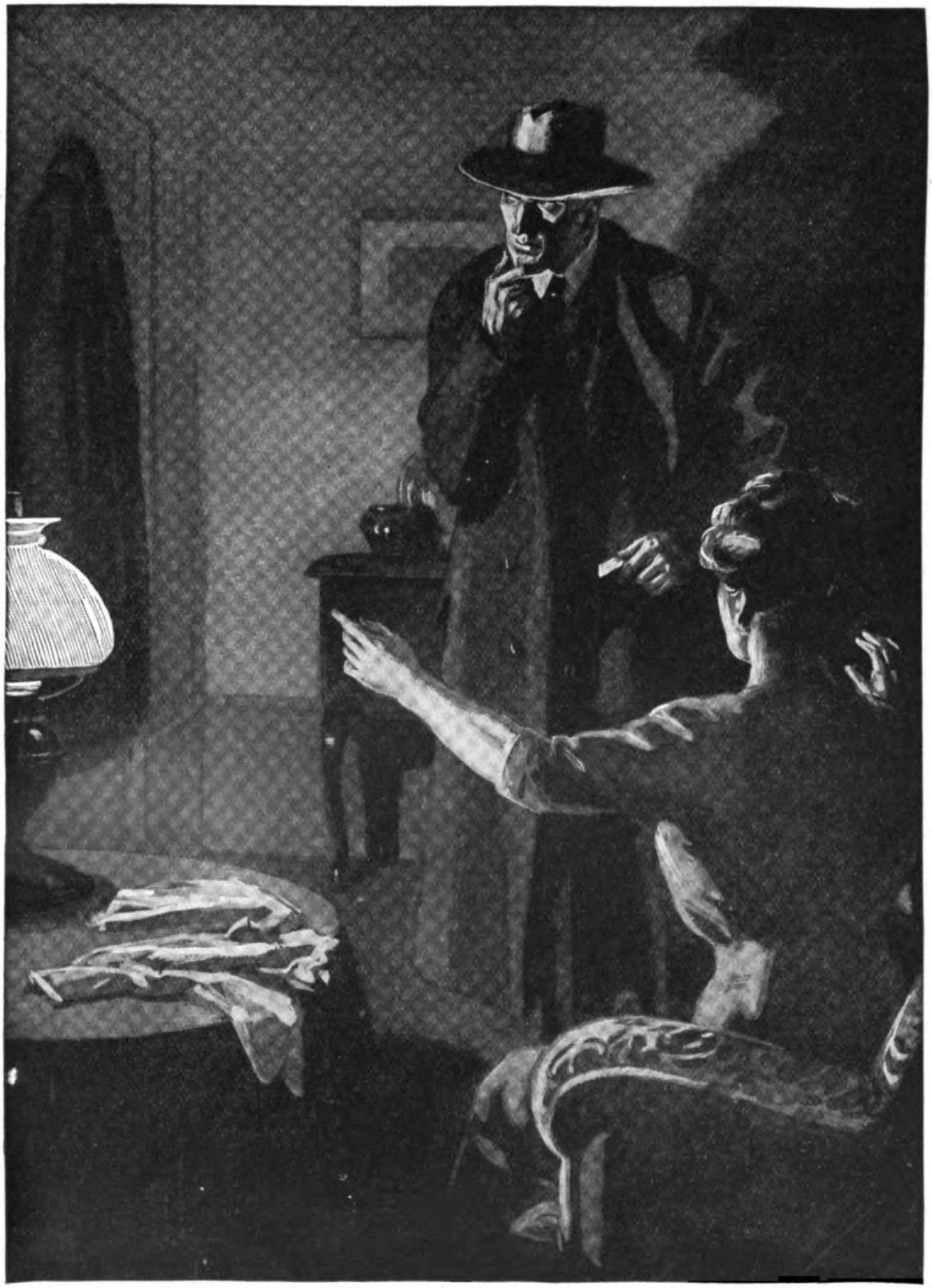
The men got away with a certain amount of plunder, but in the struggle one of the men had put aside the toy lantern he was carrying in his hand for the purpose of finding his way about, and, the thieves making a hurried departure after the murder, he left the lantern behind him.

The wick of the toy lantern was made with a piece of flannelette, and to prevent it flaming the rim of the burner was heightened with a pen-nib. That was the only clue that the men left behind them to assist the police in identifying them.

When the police went over the premises they had no difficulty in arriving at the conclusion that the crime was the work of professionals.

The first task of the police when a burglary, with or without violence, has taken place and it gives evidence of being the work of experts, is to look up all "old lags" and

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"I'VE HAD NO NEWS OF HIM AT ALL. THAT'S HIS COAT HANGING BEHIND THE DOOR, JUST AS HE LEFT IT."

ticket-of-leave men, and find out if any of them were absent from the addresses at which they last reported themselves.

It was then discovered that two of the fraternity, Albert Milsom and Henry Fowler, who were known to be friends and who had "worked together" on one or two occasions, were missing. Their relatives said they had gone into the country.

The detective who made the inquiry at

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"WHY, THERE'S THE LANTERN I LOST WEEKS AGO. HOW EVER DID YOU GET IT?"

Milsom's house discovered that he had a little brother-in-law, Harry Miller, a boy of about ten years of age, who lived with his sister, Milsom's wife.

When Sergeant Burrell, who was one of the officers in charge of the case, heard of this, he remembered the toy lantern the murderers had left behind them at the villa. If he could prove that such a lantern had ever been in Milsom's house, the connecting link

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between Milsom and the murder would be a strong one. But it was not at all likely that any member of the suspected man's family would acknowledge that they had ever seen the lantern before, and they would certainly not give the information to a police officer. They would be too wary for that.

Burrell discovered by careful inquiry that some of the boys in the street had seen young Miller playing with a lantern of this description; but it was necessary that the boy himself should, if possible, be made to acknowledge the ownership.

If Burrell had gone to him with the lantern and said, "Is this yours?" the boy, who might have been warned not to answer questions, would probably have denied it, so the detective hit upon an ingenious plan.

He had ascertained that every morning young Miller went to a little corner shop to purchase a loaf of bread for the family breakfast-table.

Taking the toy lantern with him, Burrell went to the shop, interviewed the woman who kept it, and, telling her that it was a police matter, requested her to put the lantern on the shelf just over the counter, the shelf on which the loaves were kept.

The next morning early Burrell came to the shop and saw that the lantern was where he wanted it to be. He instructed the woman to take the loaf of bread from the exact spot at which the lantern had been placed. The boy's eyes would follow the woman's action, and he would see the lantern.

Sergeant Burrell then went into a little back room which was shut off from the shop by a swing door. He left the door a little ajar, and stood well behind it.

Young Miller came to the shop at the usual time and asked for a loaf of bread. The woman turned to take it from the shelf. The boy's eyes followed her hand, and instantly he exclaimed: "Why, there's the lantern I lost weeks ago. How ever did you get it?"

"Oh, it's yours, is it?" said the woman, following the instructions that had been given her. "There it is, then."

She handed the lantern to the boy, and instantly Burrell stepped out, and, taking the boy gently by the arm, conveyed him to the police-station, where he was hospitably entertained. At the same time a message was sent to his sister telling her not to be alarmed at the boy's absence, as he was in good hands and being well taken care of.

Milsom and Fowler were eventually arrested. They were traced to Bath, where they had become members of a travelling show.

An inspector and two officers, one of whom was Burrell, broke into the house where the little company had taken lodgings on Sunday night, and, with revolvers levelled, called out: "Hands up!"

Milsom obeyed quietly. Fowler made a desperate fight of it, but in the end was overpowered, and both men were secured.

It was proved later that Fowler had been at Milsom's house on the night that the burglary was committed, that he had seen little Miller's lantern on the dresser, and had slipped it into his pocket, saying to Milsom, "This will do for us."

In the dock at the Old Bailey Fowler, a powerful ruffian, suspecting Milsom of having made a confession, leapt suddenly at him and felled him to the ground. There was a desperate struggle, in which several policemen took part, and there was a scene which is unique in the romance of the famous Hall of Tragedies.

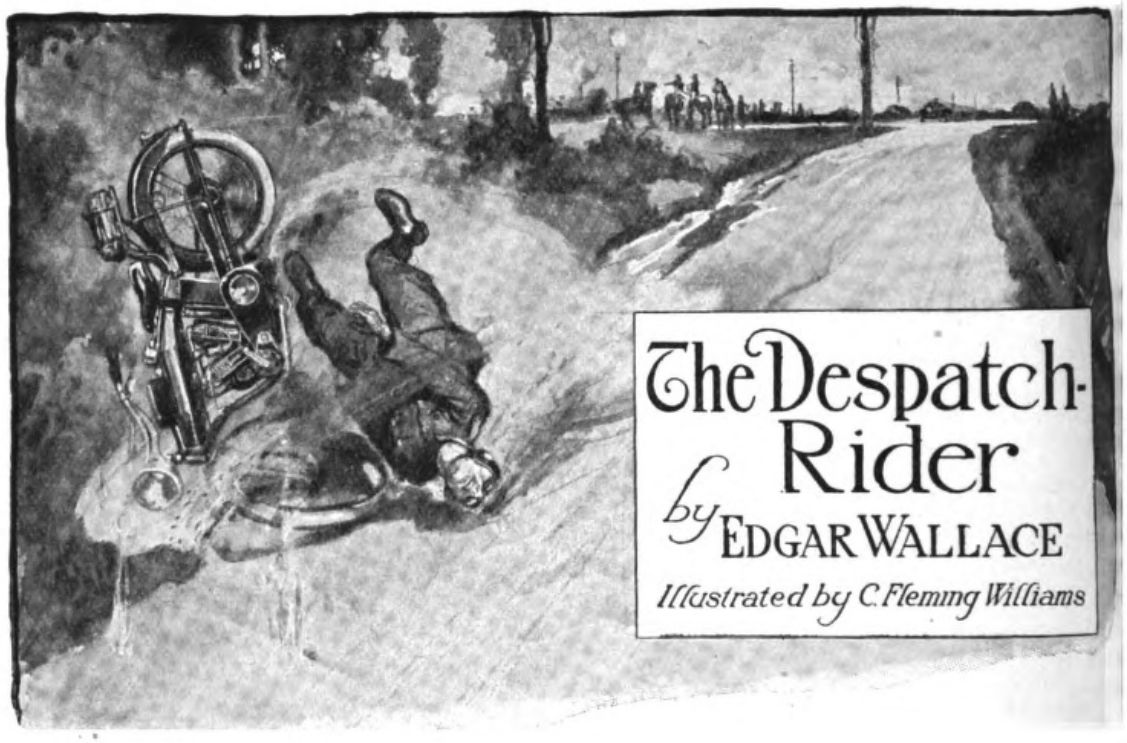
Both were executed, but the fear that even on the scaffold Fowler might try to attack his companion was so great that another man was placed for execution between them—a man named Seaman, who had murdered an old gentleman and his housekeeper in a house in an East-end street in the middle of the day.

Alarmed by someone coming to the door, he had got out on to the roof, and Inspector Wensley, who was then a constable on the beat, had a desperate struggle with him among the chimney-pots, Seaman eventually leaping from the roof to the pavement and seriously injuring himself.

The toy lantern was the damning proof of the guilt of the two men. Fowler, when he put it in his pocket, had said, "This will do for us," and it did "do" for them, thanks to the clever detective feat of Sergeant Burrell.

Some remarkably clever detective feats have been performed in connection with the locating and arrest of German spies in this country, but that is a story which cannot be told until the war is over.

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# The Despatch-Rider

by EDGAR WALLACE

*Illustrated by C. Fleming Williams*

I.

LADY GALLIGAY was always starting things; other people usually carried them on, complaining bitterly the while that they had ever been born to assume the responsibilities which Lady Galligay created. For the "things" that she started with such zest invariably ended and finished without any assistance whatsoever. They faded away without violence and without noise. In January all Tadminster would be talking of Lady Galligay's newest project; there would be drawing-room meetings innumerable. They might even develop shape as a "cause," and attain to the dignity of a public meeting, recorded in large type in the *Tadminster Times*. But by April, so feeble would the flame of interest flicker, that it was a case of "By the way, what happened to that great scheme of Lady Gally's?" when men and women met.

"The Tadminster Mounted Nurse and Despatch-Rider Corps" was one of this feather-brained little lady's most brilliant inventions. She was forty, and vague, and rich, and immensely energetic, and if she lacked stamina it was not to be expected that all the virtues of organization should dwell in one small body. It was after her "Cottage and Pigsty" for the democracy had been rejected by the same democracy, although two cottages were built and a whole drov of pigs had been mobilized, that Lady Galliga had planned her Mounted Nurses' Corp It was an idea—even George Mestrell agree that it was an idea, but, of course, he nev dreamt that Jo would take up with th beastly thing. If the truth be told, Jo wa rather aghast at finding herself enrolled, bu Lady Gally was so awfully plausible, and- well, there it was; George must take th situation as he found it, or leave it.

George, full of good spirits, came down fro Aldershot one Saturday in spring, bringing so to speak, the good news from Aix, for ther had been an unexpected resignation and h had got his company. It made all th difference in the world, because matrimon was not encouraged amongst subaltern officer He was entirely full of his good news, and s on the edge of the settee in the dinky litt drawing-room of Nearminster House, and Gresham, demure and beautiful, her tend grey eyes smiling approval of her soldier lov and his enthusiasm, waited to impart h own news.

She broke it obliquely, with a fine preten of unconcern. Instinctively she felt, or he felt, that there was something in Lady Gal gay's latest which was not quite——

"I suppose you've heard of Lady Gally corps?" she asked, carelessly.

He had a trick of smiling with his ey which ordinarily was very pleasing. For th

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rst time in their acquaintance it failed to arm her. Rather it sent her heart sinking own and down.

"Why do you smile?"

"I read something about it in the papers," e laughed. "What a dear, funny old bird he is! Not a bad idea, but imagine a corps f attractive young women gallivanting over modern battlefield!"

"In the sacred cause of humanity," she aid. She knew she was being horribly trite, nd felt no sweeter in consequence.

He stared up at her solemnly, for she had sen and stood, a slim, heroic figure, her ebellious chin tilted up, her fine brows set n menace.

"You are a soldier and you are biased," he went on, slowly. "You don't realize how vomen's positions have changed, how their apacities have enlarged. You don't under-tand."

Now the curious thing was, as she admitted o herself, that she herself had thought the corps a little ridiculous, and on the first 'parade" she had felt so self-conscious as o vow a vow never again to appear in public so arrayed. But now, encountering a half-anticipated opposition, her attitude of mind had changed, and she indulged herself in a veritable orgy of inconsistency. She was unreasonably angry with him.

"Wait!" she commanded, suddenly, and whisked out of the room.

He waited, frowning his bewilderment, a neat, cleanly soldier man. How like Jo to jump down his throat for nothing at all! She was the dearest and sweetest and most perverse and obstinate of girls, and why on earth she should champion Gally the Lord only knew. So he thought, and, thinking, wondered why she had left him so dramatically. After ten minutes' wait, ten minutes in the course of which he was by turn angry, amused, alarmed—suppose she was crying over something he had said?—and resigned, he heard her footsteps on the parquet of the hall, and rose as she entered. He had had no intention of rising, because George's manners were deplorable, as everybody in Tadminster knows, but he rose—and gasped.

She came into the room, closing the door behind her, and stood, a little flushed, a little defiant, confronting him. Upon her pretty head was a wide sombrero hat, which was fastened under her chin by a strap. She wore a tight-fitting tunic blouse of blue cloth, with two rows of silver buttons; a skirt of serge braided in scarlet, which reached only so far as midway between knee and ankle; patent leather riding boots; and a suggestion of dark blue riding breeches went with snow-white haversack, military cross-belt, and riding gauntlets to complete the picture.

For a moment there was silence; then he spoke.

"Fancy dress or something?"

She pressed her lips tightly together and shook her head. There was a light in her eyes which should have warned him.

"What *is* the joke?" he asked, earnestly. "Is it private theatricals?"

She withered him with one glance.

"This is the uniform," she said.

"The uniform?"

"Lady Galligay's Mounted Nurses and Messengers," she explained, with unnatural patience.

He looked at her from head to toe, and in his scrutiny there was to Jo something unpardonably offensive.

"But," he said, slowly, "you're not rowing in that galley, dearie—dash it all, I mean you're not one of those infernally sill—I mean one of those——" He blundered himself to a standstill.

"Go on, please," she encouraged him, though her eyes were very moist and she was biting her very red lips with unnecessary vehemence.

"But, my girlie, it's so dashed absurd!" He blurted out the truth in his despair, this tall young man (something of a strategist in another field).

"Absurd?"

"I mean," he floundered, "it's so jolly theatrical, and the girls look such guys, and——"

"Thank you."

"But don't you see," he protested, "you can do nothing—you can't gallop about on a battlefield, darling; it isn't done. What *can* you do? You can't carry wounded soldiers about on horseback; and, as for despatch-riding, who the dickens is going to take orders from you?"

"I can—we can do many things," she said, firmly and coldly; "but it would be foolish of me to argue the matter—I think you are just horrid, and I hate you!"

He stood in the centre of the room after she had flounced out, and for exactly three minutes he was penitent. Then he became annoyed, and when a tight-lipped and wholly antagonistic maid had informed him curtly that Miss Josephine was not to be seen, he was very angry indeed, and went back to town by the next train.

And that was the beginning of a tactless

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correspondence between two young people, a correspondence in which the effect of a certain scrappy tenderness was utterly annihilated by the indiscriminate use of notes of exclamation.

Jo resigned her membership of the Flying Nurses, gave her uniform to the gardener—an unimaginative man who saw possibilities for little boys' breeches in the voluminous riding-skirt—and she went abroad on the long-planned motor tour through South-Western France, previously dispatching a half-hoop of diamonds with a curt note to "Lieutenant G. Mestrell, 1st Southamptonshire Regiment, Talavera Barracks, Aldershot." And this though George had explained to her the highly important fact that he had secured his captaincy.

Of her adventures, her spasms of remorse, of letters reproachful and letters affectionate and letters completely penitent which she wrote and tore up, it is not necessary to tell. She lost her girl companion at a little town between Paris and Orleans.

There were rumours of war in the air, but that was no unusual experience in France. Bertha Mansell, however, was nervous, and must go home, and Jo was left with her little two-seater to decide whether she should take the Paris-Amiens road, or whether she should continue northward to the old-world town of Senlis. Here in the heart of the country an aunt had a little château. Jo decided on the second course, and came to the Château Verte to find herself its sole occupant, Aunt Martha having been bitten by the war scare and having left in a hurry for England.

It suited Jo, this month of absolute rest after the strenuous days of motoring. She sketched and slept and listened with amusement to the wild stories of war which an ancient French servitor and his no more youthful spouse regaled her with.

Then one day she awoke with a shock to learn the truth. There was war. Motoring out towards Beauvais, she had seen French soldiers marching northward. Belgium had been invaded, Liége was in their hands—even Brussels, they said, but that was unbelievable. Yes, it was possible to get to Ostend, but she must hurry.

The English were also at war, they told her, but only on the sea. She felt a sudden lightening of heart at this—hugged the obviously unlikely story to her heart, though reason told her that one Service could not be engaged without the other.

She hurried back to the château, packed her traps, and strapped them to the rear of her little car. The servitor and his wife h already made preparations for departure.

"Take the road through Maubeuge, a branch off to Condé, mademoiselle," said t man; "but"—his face was troubled—" would be better to go to Calais; that is o five hours away."

She shook her head.

It was a perfectly absurd considerati but she had come to the Continent by wa Ostend, and had her return ticket by t route. Moreover, there was a rebate to claimed at the frontier; a rebate of the p visional duty she had paid on her car.

Besides, she might see something of fighting—an exhilarating and joyous thoug She set her car at the hill which led from t château to the plateau above Senlis wit sense of glorious anticipation.

## II.

Over by Condé the guns were sobbi fitfully. You had to listen with your e strained to catch the insistent note. If y climbed to the high belfry of St. Peter's y saw, through good glasses, little woolly ba of smoke appearing in the air, saw the shape less drift of it as it thinned, and, listening wit all your nerves tense, you might identify one o the far-off sobs with that lazy smoke spume.

"I think mademoiselle had better go quickly." The old priest, his cassock white with the dust of the roads, was hollow-eyed and weary. His shoes were hard and burnt and grimy, and there was a two-days' stubble of beard on his chin. He stood by the side of the girl in the belfry, plucking at his lip thoughtfully, his anxious eyes divided between the northern horizon and the slim girl by his side.

Jo was young and immensely pretty—not the rose and cream prettiness of England, but the old-ivory beauty of the South. The eyes were big and grey and wide set, her mouth small but full—parted now in her excitement. The rough tweed dress, the short skirt, and puttied ankles suggested a bicycle, but it wa a little two-seater "Mombo" that stood b the porch of the old church, a worn trunk strapped to the carrier. Altogether, though Father Pierre, an incongruous figure in thi area of horrible war. Her trim hat appeare grey—it had once been a most uncompro mising black, but the roads of Southern Belgium in July are inclined to revolutioniz the intentions of the *modiste*.

"They are returning this way," said the priest, after a while, and fidgeted nervously. "Mademoiselle must abandon her idea o

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crossing Belgium—her way lies through Lille to the coast. She will be safe, for the English hold——"

"The English?" she gasped. "Are there English here?"

He nodded and smiled.

"There is a great division—there." He pointed towards Condé. "Also there are others in the rear."

"But they told me—— Are you sure, father?"

He nodded again.

He was very sure, for had he not seen the yellow coats go swaying past through Rheims —yellow coats open to show grey-blue shirts and bare brown throats?

"The regiments?" He shook his head regretfully in answer to her question.

"No, I do not know the regiments. They wore badges—here, on the collar. Some had tigers in brass, one had a sphinx in white metal, some wore little grenades, and one had a bronze fox——"

"A bronze fox!" she gasped.

There is only one regiment in the British Army that wears the "red fox," and that is the Southamptonshire Regiment — that famous fox which they won in the Nepalese War. It took her a second to decide. Somewhere over there where the guns were going "glang!" "glang!" was George — George unreconciled—in danger.

She must see him. She must tell him she was sorry. It was the maddest of ideas. She knew how absurd it was even as she went stumbling down the belfry steps, followed by the startled *curé*.

"No, mademoiselle!" he cried, in apprehension, as she turned the car to the northern road; "not that way—not that way!"

But with a cheery wave of her hand she put the little car to the long, straight road which led towards those dreadful guns.

She passed soldiers busily entrenching, French cavalry stealing along the side of the road. Once she slowed down before a cottage where a bare-armed surgeon was busy with the wreck of a man that lay stretched on a big kitchen table. They glanced at her curiously, but did not stop her. Then there was a clearer stretch of road, and she let out the little Mombo to its top licks. The guns were nearer now, their "boom-boom" was incessant, there was a horrible sound in the air—a whining, whistling, shrieking sound, and once she saw a white house far away to her right burst into flames and crumble slowly to pieces.

She passed through a tiny village which was still blazing. Men and horses lay by the side of the road in curious, unreal attitudes. They had been dragged to the side to allow a battery of artillery to pass. Later she was to see the shattered limber of one of these guns in a ditch with the feet and legs of a French soldier protruding from the wreck. It was as though he had crawled underneath to investigate the cause of the trouble — only he was so terribly still, and the girl went white and felt deadly sick.

She recovered herself with an effort, stiffened her back till she sat bolt upright, and grasped the wheel more firmly.

Then she came suddenly upon more soldiers lying by the side of the road, and occupying the centre of the broad roadway, at a place where it topped the hill before dipping again to the valley, a group of mounted men. She knew it for the general staff of a French division. They were pointing to the left, and two of the officers were looking through their glasses.

The girl stopped the car behind them. Here the roads branched off. A cross-road to the left led to Mons, as she knew; the one to the right would take her to Charleroi. But she realized she had reached the end of her journey. Here was Authority, which would send her back the way she had come. For the moment the staff were too occupied to notice her.

The dapper little general with the gold-laced *képi* was talking sharply, impatiently, to his chief of staff.

"Send a messenger at once to withdraw that company," he rapped. "*Mon Dieu*, it will be annihilated! The English have retired also. It is madness."

"I think they have——" began the other, when he was interrupted.

A group of soldiers were reclining by the side of the road. One had a small telephone receiver to his ear, and a trailing wire from a post above led down to him.

As the staff officer spoke one of the group rose and came towards the general with a slip of paper in his hand. He reached up the slip, saluting, and the general scanned the message.

"Cannot communicate with a company of the Southamptonshire Regiment on my right," he read. "Can you reach Captain Mestrell and order him to retire?"

For a moment the girl in the car swayed backward and forward; for that space of time the rush and roar of battle faded into a far-away buzz.

"Send a cyclist—it is risky." She heard the general speaking. "Tell the Englishman to take the road back to the hills by the stone cross. There's a way out for him."

She saw a young officer leap into the seat

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"YOU'VE GOT TO RETIRE AT ONCE. THE GENERAL SAYS SO."

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of his dirty motor-cycle, heard the pat-pat-pat of the engine, and watched him like one in a dream as he streaked down the hill to the right.

She watched him fascinated, gradually receding from view, then suddenly the cycle swayed left and right as though the driver were trying to evade some invisible obstacle. With one final lurch, cycle and rider went crashing to the ground, and the messenger did not rise.

"Send another man."

The curt tone of the general came to her.

Again an officer mounted and went whizzing down the hill. He reached the bottom before, without warning, he went tumbling over and over till at last he lay an inert little bundle of humanity under his broken machine.

The girl heard the impatient click of lips.

"I can't risk another man. The road is swept by rifle fire."

They were going to leave him—to leave George and his men! Her eyes opened wide in horror at the thought. Yet she knew that the general was just.

"He will stay there till he is cut up," said the staff officer's voice, very slowly and deliberately. He had a solemn, mournful voice, she noted mechanically. She wondered in a numb, cold-blooded way if he were married. He spoke like a father of a family. A stout man, who sat his horse ungracefully. And George was to be left—to be—cut up.

The car still purred and trembled under her. The wheel on which her hand rested shivered at intervals, as though it was part of a living, reasoning organism, dreading the ordeal ahead. She did what she did without thought. She gently pressed her foot downward, and the car moved.

"Stop! Who are you, madam?"

It was the general, swinging round on his restive horse.

She could not speak; she could only point to the road that led to Mons.

She heard a warning shout, a cry of command, but they were too late to stop her.

Gathering momentum with every turn of its wheels, the little Mombo leapt down the hill. Her eyes were fixed on the road ahead. The first dead man she could pass without difficulty. She must slow to the next and go round him, and that was the danger point. She flew past the first obstacle, caught a fleeting glimpse of a doubled-up figure and a white face that stared up to the blue heaven, then the glass wind-shield smashed into a thousand pieces, and her lap was filled with splinters of glass. But she was not hit; only one flying splinter had drawn blood from her gloved hand. She was cool now, steadied the car for the man who lay in the middle of the road, and breathed a sigh of relief when she found that she had misjudged the space. There was room enough to pass. One sorrowful glance she gave to the pitiful thing which a few minutes before had been a living, breathing man, and then she began the ascent of a stiff little hill. And all the time she heard the smack, smack of bullets as they struck her car. She saw the off-side lamp jump up and fall, and once there was a sensation as though somebody had breathed a sharp, cold breath before her face.

On the crest of the hill she had immunity from danger. She ran through a cutting for half a mile, then the road turned suddenly, and she saw at the foot a rugged line of men retiring by short, sharp rushes from cover to cover. She heard the shrill whistle of an officer, and the line came with a run over the stubble field to the deep road.

At full speed she sent the car forward, laughing and crying, for she had distinguished the tall young man in command, had indeed picked him out five hundred yards away. Captain George Mestrell, unshaven and grimy, heard the wheels of the car and turned as the tiny two-seater jarred to a standstill.

"My God!" he breathed. "Jo!"

She was still laughing, though her face was wet with tears.

"There is a road behind you," she cried, shrilly, "in the wood by the stone cross, and you've got to retire at once. The general says so."

"Jo!" he repeated, and pressed his hands before his eyes.

"The road by the stone cross," she said. "Look, look! there it is; I'll show you."

She ran the car farther along the road till she came to the stone cross. There was little sign of road, only an opening in the thick bush which apparently led to the hill above, but she turned the car, and turned again, and struck a smooth track which wound between the densely-planted trees round the base of the hill on the left. She looked behind her. The men were following, and George, limping painfully, was with them.

"It is very wonderful," admitted a wholly mystified young officer a little later when a French surgeon had finished dressing an ugly bullet wound in his leg. "Can you tell me in what capacity you are serving?"

She smiled mysteriously.

"Lady Galligay's corps has been mobilized," she answered, untruthfully. And George winced.

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# Under the Mistletoe.

## By ROMA WHITE.

### Illustrated by A. K. Macdonald.

LAST Christmastide I went off to the due annual household shopping with the due annual household list in my bag. Presents for the family, presents for the maids, a bag of nuts for the parrot, a collar for the dog, and a wide piece of blue ribbon for the cat! All were carefully included, to say nothing of "Santa Claus frost" for the table decorations, certain kinds of Christmas biscuits in certain kinds of Christmas boxes, special raisins for the snapdragon,



and a large and startling assortment of Christmas crackers, representing everything possible, from serpents to suffragettes. Returning home, as I believed in triumph, I duly laid out my purchases for approval. Criticizing eyes marked them; criticizing lips, on the whole, approved them. Then, all at once, came, from the lips of the youngest, the bombshell into the family circle. "But—but—goodness gracious! *You have forgotten the mistletoe!*"

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It was quite true. I *had* forgotten it. Living in the heart of the country, where berried holly abounds, and great ivy boughs are to be had for the hewing, there had been no need to include the usual festal greenery in my shopping list. But we do not grow mistletoe. Nobody round about us grows mistletoe. Only a journey by train back to the town from which I had just returned could bring the missing sprays of pale green leaves and pearly berries within our reach. I gazed round, apologetic, yet resigned. But already an energetic member of the household was getting into cap and coat. "I'll find some mistletoe somewhere. *It wouldn't be Christmas without it.*" And, booted and spurred, as it were, for the quest, he plunged forth into the night.

Now, there was really no earthly reason for mistletoe. We none of us, by any chance, ever kiss under it, for the simple reason that, being a united and closely-related family, we kiss, as a matter of course, every morning and every evening of the three hundred and sixty-five days of the year—when we are at home to do it. Therefore the mistletoe could, at best, only be a symbol of something—of possible kisses of the future, of forgotten kisses of the past. Anyway, it was a symbol of Christmas, and because of this something would be lacking in the spirit of the house if it were not there.



"IT WAS JUST THE PRESIDING DEITY OF KISSING."

And so, as I looked up at the mistletoe, duly procured from somewhere by the knight-errant of kisses, and installed ceremoniously in the lighted hall, I began to think of all that it

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stood for—or, rather, *hung* for—in the Christmas season. It was just the presiding deity of kissing—the goddess *Oscula*, if I may be allowed to invent the title. It branched under the ceiling in its green and white beauty to proclaim boldly to all the world that kissing was an invention of the gods—thought of, first of all, by Venus,





Prince who woke up the Sleeping Beauty—a beautiful vision, in the red and green and blue colouring of the old nursery books, with a sweeping ostrich feather in his

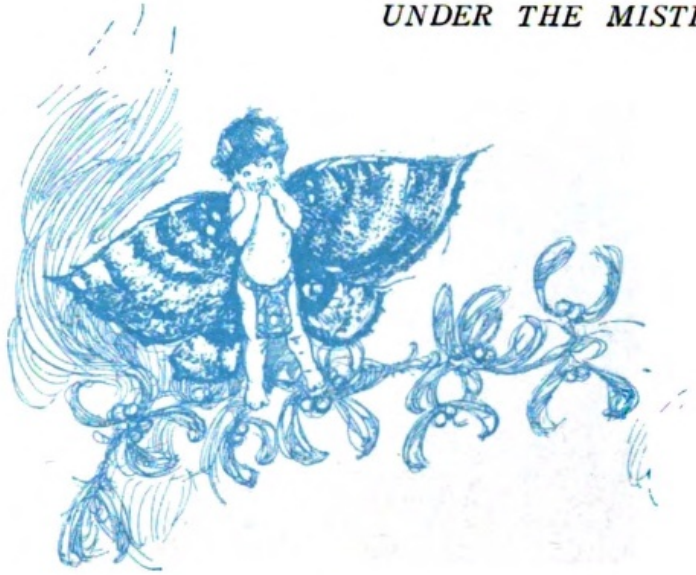
and taught to the world of mortals by innumerable Cupids. It recalled a host of idylls, ancient and modern, and witnessed to the immeasurable superiority—plainly declared by all the classics—of the act of kissing over the act of rubbing noses—a most barbaric and unimaginative form of love-making! We all remember the "Geisha" and the delight of the little Japanese girl when her English sailor-lover first showed her how to kiss! "*Who* taught you to kiss?" is, I believe, a question invariably put by lovers—half in ecstasy, half in jealous fear. "The mistletoe!" would be a delightful reply to the question, which might then be considered as answered to the satisfaction of everybody concerned.

I imagined, too, a shadowy figure from Fairyland, hovering always where the shadow of the mistletoe fell. It was the ghost of the



"KISSING WAS TAUGHT TO THE WORLD OF MORTALS BY INNUMERABLE CUPIDS."

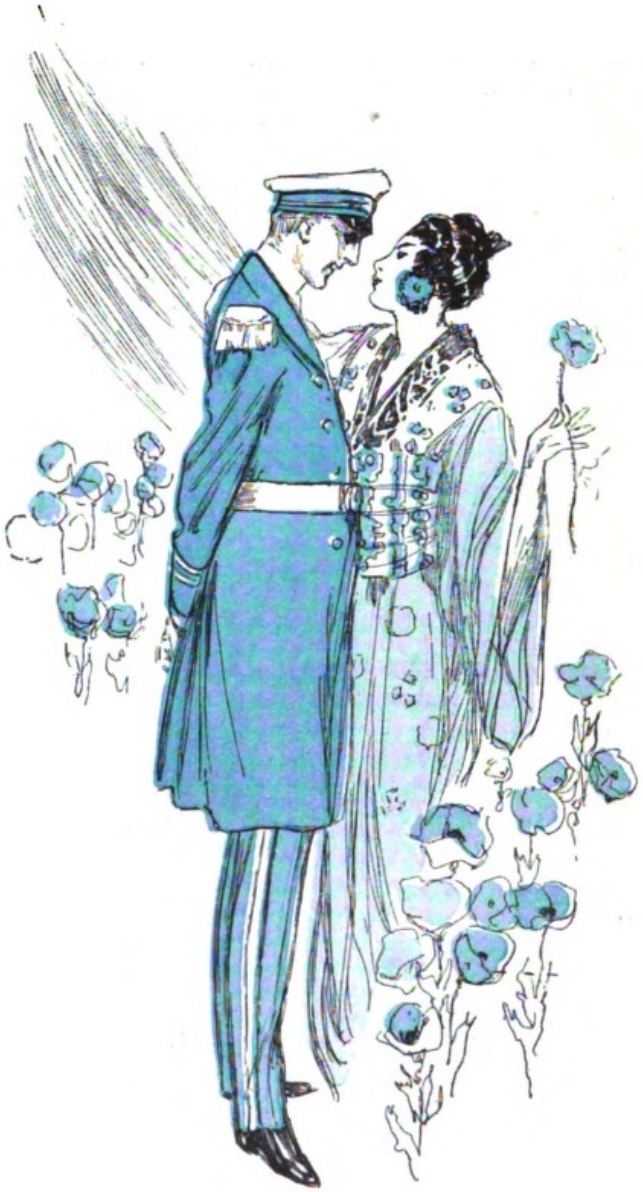
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cap, and magnificent hunting-boots upon his legs. Such a Prince is the Prince for all the little sleeping Princesses of the world. But he only lives and kisses under the mistletoe. When his earthly prototype comes out with the awakened Princess they have to emerge into a dullish sort of world, get married in a church, and bring up a respectably-comported family. The kiss given under the mistletoe cannot be duplicated or repeated. It belongs to the hanging bough of romance. That is why, as I said at first, we, as a grown-up and united family, never kiss under the mistletoe now. It wouldn't be an appropriate kind of kiss. We couldn't say "Good night" or "Good morning" or even "A happy Christmas" there. The mistletoe-kiss has no greeting of words attached to it. It is just a sudden snatch at the ambrosial cup so jealously guarded by the gods.

But "for old sakes' sake" the mistletoe hangs there, and "for old sakes' sake" we smile sentimentally, even a little enviously, as we glance up at it. It has been grown upon an old apple tree or an old oak tree, a symbol of eternal childhood springing from eternal age. I hate to hear it called, botanically, a "parasite." It is no more a parasite than is the little laughter-loving child that the old grandfather carries so proudly in his arms.

Wise and reverend Druids! It was, I believe, from a custom inaugurated by them that we kiss under the mistletoe. I wonder if they knew all the delights for future generations that they were aiding and abetting? I wonder if they ever sampled mistletoe-kisses themselves, or if it was their young men and maidens who told them about it, and persuaded them to give grave and official countenance to the custom? If they were ever taken in by believing it to be a sedate religious ceremony, Cupid must have had something to do with it—he was always a mischievous monkey, haunting places where he had not



"HER ENGLISH SAILOR-LOVER FIRST SHOWED HER HOW TO KISS."

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the slightest business to be. The Cupid of that date must have been the forerunner of Puck!

We make fun of the mistletoe and laugh at mistletoe-kisses, just as we laugh at the sayings of a child or the gambols of a kitten. It is the laughter of a great and sweet tenderness within us. In one of Mrs. Steele's novels a character wonders why a charming woman married a man called "Gissing," and another character suggests frivolously that it is because his name rhymed with "kissing." It is the sort of thing—only much wittier—that we are all of us saying always. "When the gorse is out of bloom kissing is out of fashion." But the gorse never *is* out of bloom! No more is kissing ever outside our lives—kissing and all it stands for. "An egg without salt is like kissing without a moustache." There it is again—another kissing proverb absorbed into the language. And in an essay by no less a philosopher than Lord Macaulay, I recall the famous saying that "Cold veal is like kissing your sister." Obviously both Lord Macaulay and the author of the saltless egg epigram had experienced to the full the thrill of kissing under the mistletoe. No cold veal or eggs without salt are the diet *there!* That is why we love the mistletoe!



"THE KISS OF THE OLD WEDDED COUPLE."

Christmas without the mistletoe! No, indeed! Where would be the place for Cupid to perch? He could never sit atop of the plum-pudding. He filched the bough from the Druids thousands of years ago, and makes his winter home in it to-day. He knows that, underneath its pale berries, there will only be given and taken the quick, laughing, tremulous kisses of romance. There are so many Christmas kisses exchanged—some sober, some sorrowful, some sweet. There is the kiss of the old wedded couple—tender, recollected, delicately quiet. There is the kiss of brother and sister — kind, perfunctory, and possibly less like cold veal on Christmas morning than on other mornings. There is the kiss between little children—a hasty, butterfly-like affair that might, at a moment's notice, be turned into a militant and earnestly-discharged slap! There is the kiss that reconciles quarrels—a sad kind of kiss, for quarrels that are real are seldom healed, merely



"A HASTY, BUTTERFLY-LIKE AFFAIR."

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hidden and hushed. There is the kiss between parent and child — protective, tender, hopeful on the one side; careless, affectionate, everyday-like on the other. Not mistletoe-kisses, ne'er a kiss among them! They can be given and taken anywhere — over the family coffee-pot or under the family chandelier. But for the mistletoe-bough is reserved the sweetest kiss of all — the kiss of illusion.

So Cupid, the eternal child, perches and sports among the leaves and berries of the mistletoe, and we hang it in our midst to remind us of the eternal youth of love. For everything else ages and everything else fades. We know that we cannot keep our illusions, but we give up one day in the year —Christmas Day—to the renewal of them. "Peace on earth, goodwill to men!" It is a great renewal, that. A great and exquisite pause in the march and flight of life to renew our faith in the simple, which is always the sublime. We want to feel like children again on Christmas Day. That is why we put sixpences and therepences, and silver thimbles and golden wedding-rings, into the plum-pudding. That is why we set almonds and raisins on fire and burn our fingers to snatch them out. We might much more easily and comfortably remove them from the ordinariness of the dessert-dish—but there was a time when to snatch a raisin from the very heart of a blue flame gave us a thrill almost equal, one imagines, to the thrill felt by Siegfried when he dashed in and rescued Brünnhilde from the pyre. It is because we want to play at being children again that we pull apart crackers with a squeal of pretended anguish and deck our persons with the amazing paper garments disinterred therefrom. For how exquisitely exciting were the plum-pudding sixpences, and the snapdragon, and the crackers in the days of our illusions! So we pretend to feel them in the same way even now, and are none the worse for the game of make-believe.



"THE SWEETEST KISS OF ALL—THE KISS OF ILLUSION."

But we never make any pretence of kissing under the mistletoe—we never seek to renew *that*, the dearest, tenderest, sweetest illusion of all. We know that it would be useless — mistletoe-kisses can never be simulated or renewed. We can only love the memory of them, and find, in the memory, a thrill of our first heart's delight. And so we hang up the mistletoe-bough Christmas Eve after Eve; and much more, really, than the pudding and the crackers and the snapdragon is it the symbol of the eternal youth and illusion bestowed upon the world by the gods.

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# IN THE TEMPLE

Retold from the Swedish
by CATHERINE S. KIEHL

Illustrated by T. H. Robinson

Legends relating to the youth of Christ have sprung up and bloomed, flower-like, in the literature of many nations. Some of these are known to every reader; such, for example, as those which Longfellow embodied in "The Golden Legend." The following, however—in spite of an appealing beauty not easy to forget—is here for the first time rendered into English.

THEY were just poor people, the man, woman, and child, roaming about in the big temple at Jerusalem. But the boy was a lovely child, with curly hair and eyes that shone like stars. Since he was old enough to understand what he saw around him their son had not been in the temple, and now his parents were showing him all the beauty and wonders that it contained. There were lofty aisles and golden altars. Holy men were sitting with their pupils; there were the High Priests with their adornments of jewels and precious stones; the curtain from Babylon interwoven with golden roses, and the great brass gates, so heavy that thirty strong men were required to turn them on their hinges. But the little boy, who was only twelve years old, did not care about all these things, though his mother told him that they were now showing him the most noteworthy things in all the world.

She told him it would be a long time before he would see anything like it again. In the poor quarter of Nazareth where they lived there was nothing to look at but grey streets. However, nothing his mother could say excited his interest; he looked as if he would have been glad to run away out of the temple, and be at liberty to play about in those same grey streets of Nazareth.

They were in the most distant part of the temple, and now hastened to make their way to the entrance. On the way thither they passed an old vault which had stood on that spot long before King Solomon built the temple, and leaning against one of the walls stood a great brass trumpet. It was covered with dust and cobwebs, and it looked as if it had not been used for many thousands of years. There was an old inscription, but because the instrument was so worn and battered the lettering was almost erased.

When the little boy spied this trumpet he stood still in wonder.

"Mother," he cried, "what in the world is that?"

"That is the great brass trumpet which Moses used to assemble the children of Israel when they were scattered in the desert," said his mother. "It is called 'The Voice of the King of the World.' Since the time of Moses no one has been able to draw a sound from it, but it is said that he who can do so shall one day bring all the nations of the earth in subjection under his feet."

She laughed, for she believed it to be only an old legend. But the child remained by the trumpet until she called him to her side. When he obeyed he heaved a long sigh, for the trumpet was the first of all the sights that attracted him, and he would have been glad to stay and look at it again.

Before long they came to the temple court.

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There, in the rock itself, was a deep chasm; it had been there always, even before King Solomon built the temple. No bridge had been built over the broad ravine, but Solomon laid a blade of steel with sharp edges, several yards long, from one border to the other. Years had passed and many changes taken place, but this sword-blade still stretched across the chasm, just as in King Solomon's time.

When the mother led the child along the margin of the chasm he inquired, "What bridge is that?"

"We call it the 'Bridge of Paradise,' answered his mother. "He who is able to walk across that bridge, the sharp edge of which is thinner than a sunbeam, is certain of gaining entrance into Paradise."

She laughed and hastened on. But the boy remained behind and gazed and gazed at the sharp blade till his mother called him to her. Then he drew a deep sigh, as if he were sorry his mother had not shown him these two wonderful sights before, that he might have looked at them as long as he desired.

Now they went on without stopping, until they came to the great entrance gates, with its five double rows of pillars. Here, also, stood in one corner a pair of black marble pillars set upon one base, and so close to one another that a wisp of straw could hardly pass between them. They were high and majestic, with richly decorated chapiters, while on the sides were wrought all manner of strangely-shaped heads of beasts, worn and time-eaten with immemorial years. Even the floor round their base was worn and trampled by the tread of feet through many ages.

Again the boy stopped his mother and asked, "What pillars are these?"

"Those are the pillars which Father Abraham brought to Palestine from Chaldea, and he called them the 'Gate of Justice.' He who is able to pass through that narrow opening has no sin in him."

The boy looked up with longing eyes at the great towering pillars.

"You surely will not try to pass through?" asked his mother, smiling. "You can see for yourself how the floor is worn out by the foot-steps of those who have tried and failed in the attempt! But be quick now, for I hear the creaking of the brazen doors—the thirty attendants of the temple are putting their shoulders against them to get them into motion."

All night the boy lay awake in the tent and saw nothing but the Port of Justice, the Bridge of Paradise, and the Voice of the King of the World. He could think of nothing else; he had never heard of anything so wonderful. And in the morning he continued to think of them. The camp was to be broken up that morning for the journey home. His parents would have their hands full before the tent was packed and the camels laden. They were not going to travel alone; a great company of relatives and neighbours were going with them, and because there were so many people the packing only progressed slowly. The boy sat quietly at a distance and thought of the three wonders in the temple, and suddenly it came into his mind that he ought to go back and look at them once again. There was still so much to pack that they certainly would not be ready to start for a long time. Before then he would have returned from the temple.

Without telling anyone where he was going, he hurried away. It was not long before he reached the temple and stood in the porch before the two black marble pillars. His eyes shone with joy, and he sat down on the floor where he could gaze up at them. When he considered that the man who could pass between those two pillars would have no sin, he thought that there was nothing so wonderful upon the face of the earth. But they were so close together that it seemed impossible to try. He sat for a whole hour before these pillars without noticing the flight of time.

In the portal where the child sat the judges were assembled to help the people to settle their disputes. The whole portal was full of people, some of whom complained about border-stones that had been displaced, about sheep that had been stolen from the flock and branded with strange marks, and debtors who would not pay their debts. Among others was a rich man clad in sweeping purple robes, who was accusing a poor widow of owing him a few pieces of silver. The poor woman declared with tears that she had paid already. She was so poor that if the judges condemned her to pay twice over she would be obliged to give her daughters to be slaves to the rich man.

He who sat on the highest seat of judgment turned to the man and said, "Can you swear that the woman has not paid you?" And the rich man answered, "Sir, I am a wealthy man. Should I take the trouble to sue her for this money if it was not owing? I swear that, just as it is impossible for anyone to pass through the Port of Justice, so truly does this woman owe me the money which I require of her."



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When the judges heard this oath they believed him, and condemned the widow to give her daughters to be the rich man's slaves.

And the boy sat there and heard all this, and he thought to himself: "What a good thing it would be if someone could squeeze through those Gates of Justice. I am sure that rich man is not speaking the truth. It is terrible for this poor woman to give her daughters into slavery."

He sprang upon the base from which the two pillars towered upwards, and he looked through the crevice. Oh! if only it was not quite impossible to pass through! He pitied the poor widow with all his heart, and he set his shoulder against the opening. And at that moment everyone looked up and gazed towards the Port of Justice, for a sound as of tabrets and cymbals making music together filled the vast portal. The old pillars had burst into song; they swayed away on either side, and through the opening came a slender boy!

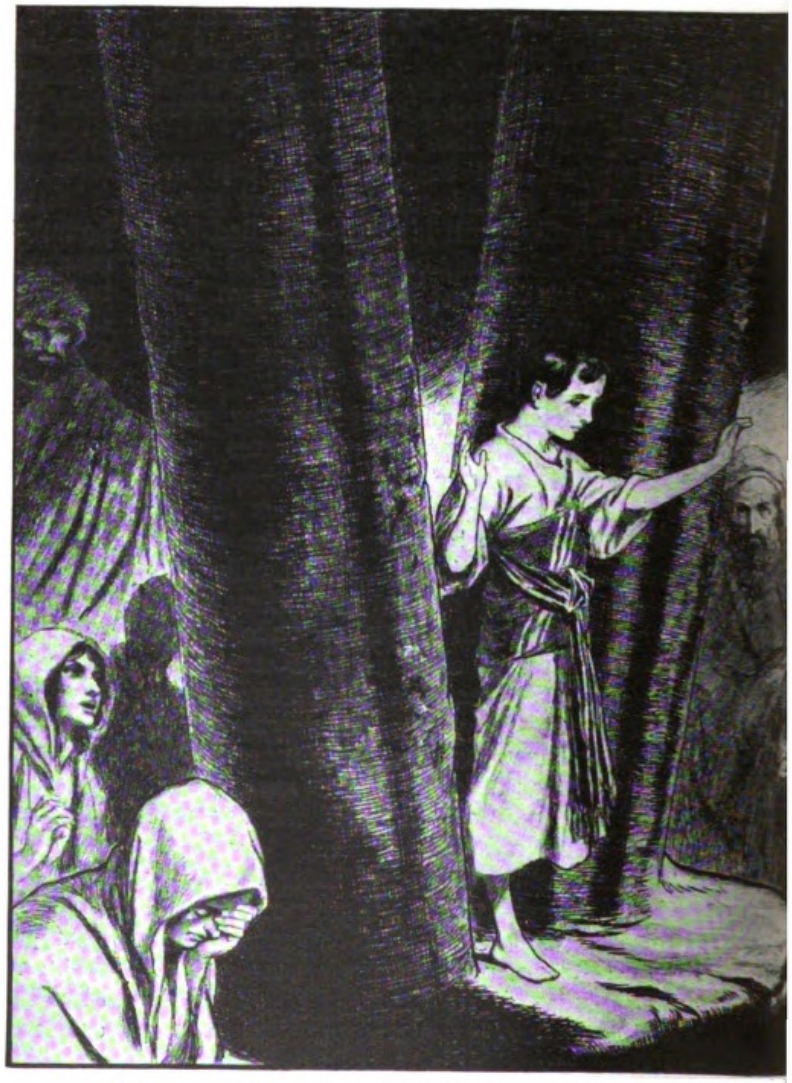
And now surprise and wonder seized the assembled multitude. In the first moment nobody knew what to say. The people all stood and gazed at the young boy who had performed so miraculous a feat. The first who recovered his wits was the judge himself. He called to his servants to seize the rich merchant and to bring him before the court of justice; and he condemned him to bestow all his riches and all his possessions upon the poor widow because he had sworn a false oath in the House of God.

When this was finished the judge asked where the boy was who had passed through the Gates of Justice, but nobody could tell him. For at the very moment that the pillars swept apart the boy had remembered his parents and the journey home, and he had thought: "Now I must be quick, or they will have to wait for me." But he did not know that he had been sitting before the Gates of Justice for fully an hour; he thought he had been gone only a few minutes, so that there would still be ample time to go and look at the Bridge of Paradise and the Voice of the King of the World.

Now the Bridge of Paradise was in quite a different part of the temple, and he wended his steps thither. And he sat down by the side of the chasm to admire the bridge.

And there he sat and gazed and thought for two long hours. Now, quite close to this spot a great altar was erected, on which sacrifices were offered to the Lord. White-robed priests went to and fro around it to keep the fire burning, and a great multitude stood there ready with their offerings. An old man also came with the lamb he had brought for sacrifice. It was a very thin lamb, and, to make matters worse, it had a large wound on one side. The man approached the priests and asked whether he might offer it, but they said him nay. They said that they dared not offer to the Lord so mean a sacrifice.

"Oh, you must let me bring this offering," pleaded the man. "My son is sick and at death's door, and he may die if my supplication does not come before the Lord."



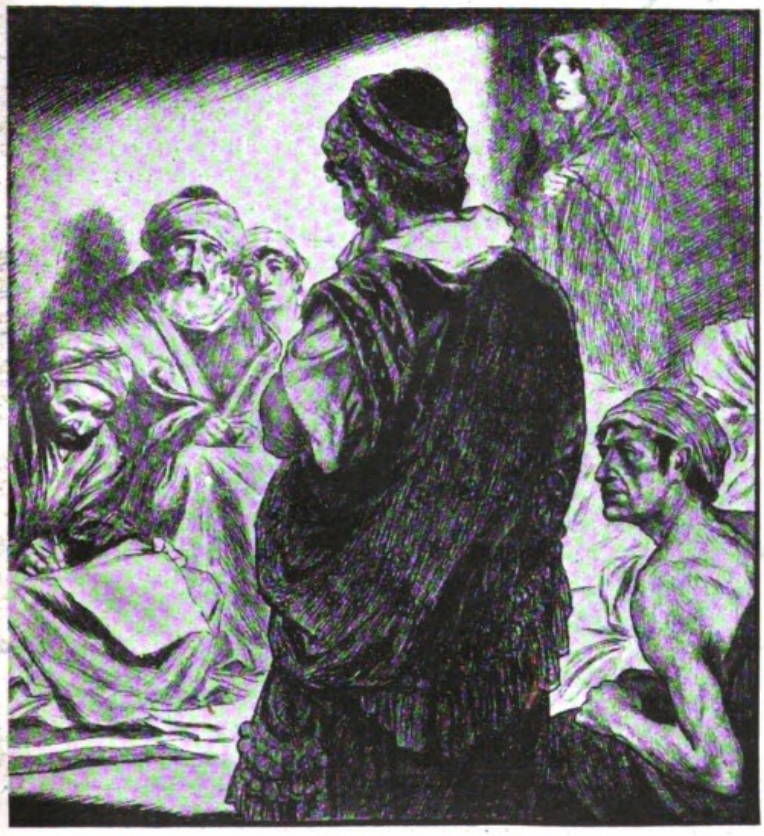
"THE PILLARS SWAYED AWAY ON EITHER SIDE, AND

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"You may be quite convinced that I pity you," said the priest; "but you know that the law forbids offering up any animal with 'spot or blemish.' It is just as impossible to comply with your request as it is impossible that anyone should walk over the Bridge of Paradise."

The boy was sitting so close by that he heard all that passed. "Ah!" he thought, "what a pity it is that no one can walk over this bridge! This poor man looks so sad, and his son might be saved if someone only could walk over that bridge."

The old man sorrowfully left the temple, but the boy suddenly arose and placed one foot upon the trembling blade. Then he drew it back again, for he feared that the bridge was too old and rusty, and would be unable to bear his weight. But then his thoughts went back again to the old man and



THROUGH THE OPENING CAME A SLENDER BOY!"

his dying son, and at once he replaced his foot. Then he observed that the blade had left off vibrating—it felt as fast and solid as a rock to his feet, and with the next step he took it was as if he had wings, as if the air all around him buoyed him up, so that he could not fall. The air carried him over as if he had been a bird. And from the stretched blade issued a wondrous tone, like the voice of an angel.

And one of those who stood in the court looked round, and he beheld the boy on the bridge! He gave a shout, and everyone in that assembly turned and saw the boy walking over the blade whose edge was thinner than a sunbeam, and great wonder and amazement fell upon all the people.

The first to gather their wits about them were the priests. Immediately they sent a messenger to the poor man, and when he came back they said to him, "God has performed a miracle to show us that we must accept your sacrifice. Give us the lamb, and we will offer it."

And when that was done they asked after the little boy, but no one had seen him. For at the moment when he passed over the Bridge of Paradise it was as if he awakened out of a dream and he remembered his parents and the journey home, and hurried away to have one look before turning homewards at the Voice of the King of the World.

With swift footsteps he passed quickly from among the people till he came to the vault where the great brass trumpet stood, buried in dust and cobwebs.

And in this cool pillared aisle a holy man sat among his pupils and taught them from the Scriptures. And he turned to one of his pupils and denounced him as a deceiver. "Why did you come to me with lies?" he said. "You are no Israelite, and yet you pretended to be one. Get you away from here. You have no right to my teachings."

Then the young man arose and said: "My soul thirsted with longing, but I knew you would not teach me if I said I was no Israelite, nor be allowed to sit here and learn true wisdom and the doctrine of the true and only God. That is why I lied to you so that my longing would be satisfied. Oh, I beseech thee, let me remain with you!"

But the holy man arose in wrath and said: "You can no more stop with me than that anyone can blow on that brass trumpet which is called the Voice of the King of the World."

But all this time the boy was sitting close by, and heard every word. "Oh!" he thought, "if only I could blow upon the trumpet, then the young man would be helped."

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"THE BLADE HAD LEFT OFF VIBRATING — IT FELT AS FAST AND SOLID AS A ROCK TO HIS FEET."

He rose and placed his hand upon the trumpet, to try whether he could lift it, and at once the great brass trumpet that had stood in the same corner for thousands of years raised itself until its mouthpiece touched the child's lips; and as he breathed into it to see whether any sound would issue, a strong, resounding trumpet-peal echoed and re-echoed through the temple, until it shook with the sound thereof.

Immediately the holy man addressed the young heathen thus: "Come," said he, "and seat yourself among my pupils. God hath performed a miracle to show me that it is His divine will that you should be initiated into His holy service."

Towards evening a man and a woman hastened along the road that led to Jerusalem. They looked anxious and frightened, and said to everyone they met: "We have lost our son. Have you seen him?" And they that came from Jerusalem answered: "We have not seen your son, but in the temple we beheld a wonderful child who went through the Port of Justice." And they would have liked to stay by the wayside and relate all the details of that wonderful vision most minutely, but the parents had no time to listen, and passed on. And in a little while they met more people coming, and they called out to them: "We have lost our son. Have you seen a child wandering alone?" But the people answered: "We have not seen him, but in the temple we saw a beautiful child, who walked over the Bridge of Paradise, and he looked as if he had come down from Heaven." And they, too, wanted to stop and talk about this thing. But the parents could not listen, and hurried on. When they reached the town they went from one street to another without seeing a trace of him they sought, and at last they came to the temple.

And the woman said: "Now we are here let us just go in and see this child who they

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"A RESOUNDING TRUMPET-PEAL ECHOED AND RE-ECHOED THROUGH THE TEMPLE."

say looks as if he has come down from Heaven."

So they entered and asked of the crowds that thronged the doorway where this wonderful child was to be seen; and one in the crowd answered and said to them: "Go straight forward to where the wise men are sitting with their pupils. They have set him in their midst, and are both hearing him and asking questions of him, and everyone marvels at his knowledge and understanding. And outside the temple everybody stops to catch a glimpse of the child who hath brought forth sound from the Voice of the King of the World."

And when they had pressed through the crowds the parents saw that the child sitting amidst the doctors was their own son. And the woman began to weep.

As soon as the boy heard his mother's voice he left his seat and came to her side; and the man and woman took him by the hand and led him forth from the temple. And all the while the mother wept.

"Mother," said the child, "why do you weep? Did I not come as soon as I heard your voice?"

"I weep," said the mother, "because I thought you were lost to me!'"

They left the town and dusk fell, and yet the mother wept.

"Mother," asked the child again, "why do you weep? I did not know that the day had gone. I thought it was still early morning."

"Should I not weep," answered the mother, "when I sought you all day and found you not? I thought that you were lost to me."

All night they continued their journey on foot, and when morning broke the mother was still weeping. And the child asked a third time, "Mother, why are you weeping? I did not seek my own honour, but God hath permitted me to perform these wonders so that He might help those poor people; and I came to you as soon as I heard your voice."

"My son," sorrowfully replied the mother, "I must weep, for truly you are lost to me. You will never be mine alone. From henceforward all your striving will be after righteousness, your desire will be towards Paradise, and your love will encompass all the nations upon the earth."

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# Engraving by Light.

## How a "Process-Block" is Made.

### By FREDERICK A. TALBOT.

Readers who open an illustrated book, or turn over a magazine, or glance at an illustrated newspaper or a hand-bill, or consult a programme or a catalogue, are everywhere brought into contact with the result of "process-printing." Comparatively few, however, are acquainted with the methods, achieved through long years of gradual improvements in skilled inventions, by which the "process-block" is made. The purpose of the following article is to explain this method in words which everyone may understand.

AS is well known, the illustrations to THE STRAND MAGAZINE are printed from what are known as half-tone blocks. These are metallic surfaces which carry a photographic image, whether the original be an oil-painting, black-and-white wash-drawing, or photograph.

But the average reader is puzzled as to how it is possible to produce a printable picture upon a metallic surface. If he takes a sheet of copper, sensitizes its surface, exposes it beneath a negative, develops and fixes the result, and then essays to multiply the production upon ordinary paper by means of ink, he achieves a sorry result—a black daub reminiscent of a censor's brush. He cannot obtain the slightest semblance to a picture. Why? We will take him behind

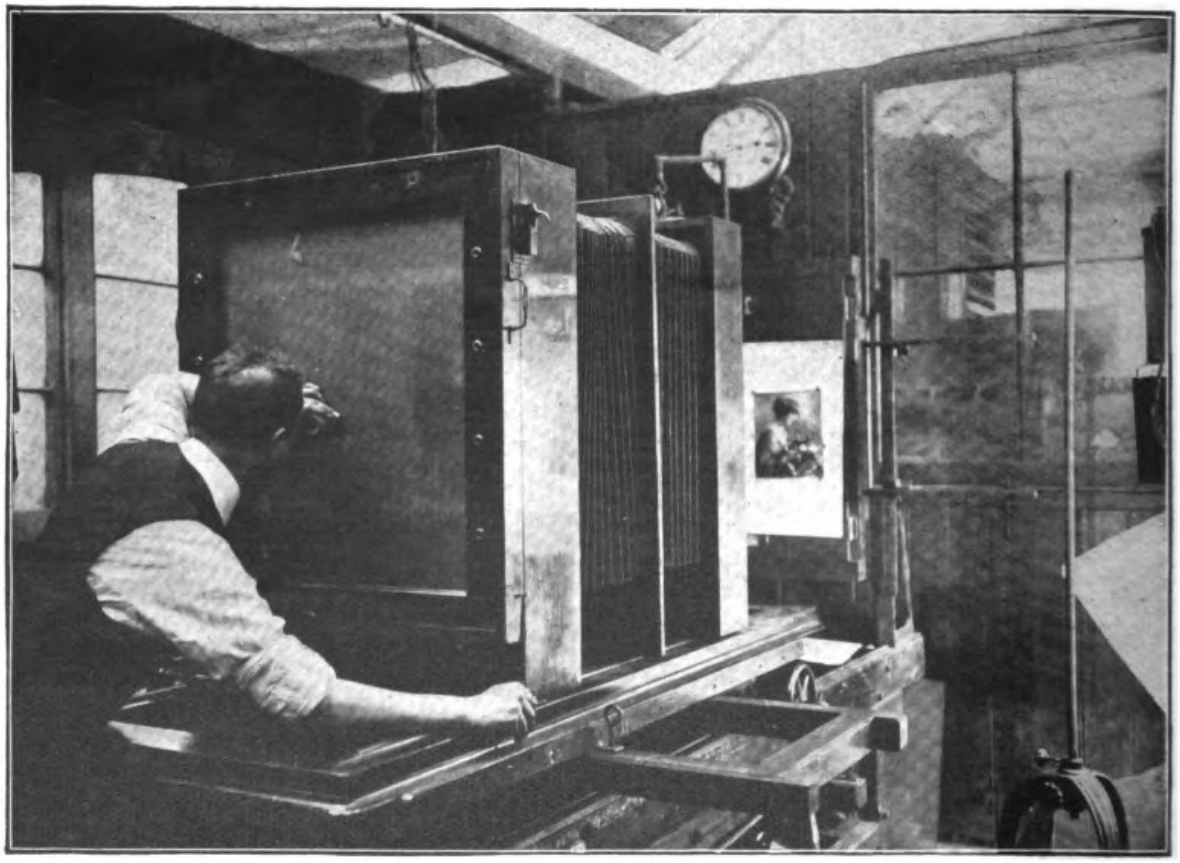


FIG. 1.—FOCUSING THE CAMERA. COMPARISON WITH THE OPERATOR CONVEYS SOME IDEA OF ITS LARGE SIZE.

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the scenes in the department of THE STRAND MAGAZINE in which this apparently magical work is carried out, and reveal some of what may be described as the tricks of the trade.

The production of blocks for this purpose is known as " process engraving."

The room in which the first stage of the work is carried out recalls a photographer's studio. Cameras of all shapes and sizes, according to the dimensions of the blocks required, are to be seen on every side. But what an outfit! The photographic fiend can carry a machine, which will enable him to fulfil his fell work, in his waistcoat pocket, and will scarcely feel the weight of the encumbrance. The process engraver's camera (Fig. 1) and equipment would require the whole of the space of a three-ton motor-lorry and a goodly proportion of the tractive power of the vehicle to move it. The camera may be two or three feet square—sometimes more—and, instead of being set upon a tripod, it requires to be mounted upon a substantial stand, sixteen feet or so in length.



FIG. 2.—THE APPEARANCE OF THE "SCREEN" WHEN EXAMINED UNDER A MICROSCOPE.

The amateur photographer, who is able to purchase his camera for a matter of a few shillings, will hesitate to acquire a process-engraving outfit. One of the cameras whereby the illustrations of THE STRAND MAGAZINE are prepared cost a matter of ninety-six pounds, exclusive of the stand upon which it is mounted. The lens alone represented an outlay of thirty-five pounds! As it is useless to attempt this class of work without the spring stand upon which the camera is mounted and whereon it is manipulated, it is necessary to dip into the pocket for a further twenty-five pounds! Thus, before the neophyte could enter this business, his banking account would be depleted to the extent of nearly one hundred and sixty pounds!

At the end of the stand a board is set up vertically, on which is placed the picture of which a block is to be made. The subject is focused in the ordinary manner and to the size of the desired block. Powerful electric arc lights are mounted on either side of the picture, the object being to throw an even illumination over the whole subject. If one light only were used unwanted shadows would be presented, and a pictorial distortion would result. A photographic plate is slipped into the slide in the normal manner, slid into the back of the camera, and the exposure made just as if one were carrying out an ordinary copying operation by the aid of photography, the duration of the exposure naturally varying within wide limits according to the subject to be copied.

This is all perfectly straightforward and simple. Yet it is at this point that the possibility to produce a negative upon a metallic surface is achieved. The camera is fitted with an accessory which is unknown to the ordinary photographer. This is what is termed the " screen."

If one takes a process block, such as are used to illustrate this article, and examines under a microscope the surface carrying the image, one will observe that the surface is not smooth, but is indented with tiny pits. This pitting is symmetrical and regular over the area; but, whereas some of the pits are flush with the surface of the metal, others are varying fractions of an inch below, some of the differences in level being so slight as to defy mechanical measurement. Yet each dot performs a definite function, which will be described later. The point at present is to describe how they came there.

The screen really consists of two sheets of glass placed face to face. Each sheet is ruled diagonally with lines, those on one sheet running from left to right, while on the other they run from right to left. Consequently, when the two sheets are superimposed, the lines intersecting at right angles, a trellis-work effect is produced. When the screen is held up to the light and inspected, the lines, although less in breadth than the proverbial hair, are quite distinct. The ruling of these screens is an art in itself, since the lines have to be drawn with infinite care, must not vary in thickness, must be

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FIG. 3.—55 SCREEN, USED FOR NEWSPAPERS.



FIG. 4.—80 SCREEN, USED FOR PENNY WEEKLY PAPERS.



FIG. 5.—120 SCREEN, USED FOR "THE STRAND MAGAZINE."



FIG. 6.—150 SCREEN, USED FOR FINE ART PRINTING.

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FIG. 7.—THIS ENLARGED PICTURE CONVEYS A GRAPHIC IDEA OF THE EFFECT CAUSED BY THE INTERPOSITION OF THE SCREEN.

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absolutely parallel, and spaced equidistantly. When the screen is examined under the microscope the effect obtained is that shown in Fig. 2, which has been purposely enlarged to explain the ruling principle of the screen. It was the perfection of this screen which rendered printing from metal-faced blocks an accomplished fact.

The ruling of the screen varies within wide limits. Naturally in rapid printing upon cheap paper, such as that which enables the newspaper to be sold at one halfpenny, a coarse screen is required (Fig. 3). In this instance there will only be fifty-five lines to the square inch. The average penny pictorial periodical being printed on a higher class paper, is able to carry an eighty screen (Fig. 4).

In order to convey a more graphic idea of the precise effect wrought by the interposition of the screen, an enlarged picture is shown in Fig. 7. Owing to the magnification the picture appears to be constructed of dots. In fine art work the ruling will be as high as from one hundred and fifty to two hundred lines to the square inch (Fig. 6). For purposes such as the exigencies of this magazine a screen having one hundred and twenty lines to the inch (Fig. 5) meets all requirements. The price of the screen varies according to the ruling. Naturally one having two hundred lines per inch demands more time and labour in its preparation than one carrying only fifty lines per inch, and at the same time the size of the screen—that is, its superficial area—affects this factor. Thus, in the case of the camera described earlier a fifty-line screen costs fifty-eight pounds, while one of identical size, but ruled two hundred lines to the inch, costs one hundred and seventy-five pounds!

The regular intersection of these lines divides the area of the screen into equally-sized squares, each of which acts as a lens. The screen itself is mounted at the rear of the camera, and in such a manner as to come almost into contact with the photographic plate. Naturally, when the exposure is made, the rays of light forming the image have to traverse these squares upon the screen, the result being that the developed image upon the plate has been taken through extremely closely-meshed trellis-work, each line of the screen being reproduced. Thus the image in reality has been split up into a multitude of fine equally-spaced dots.

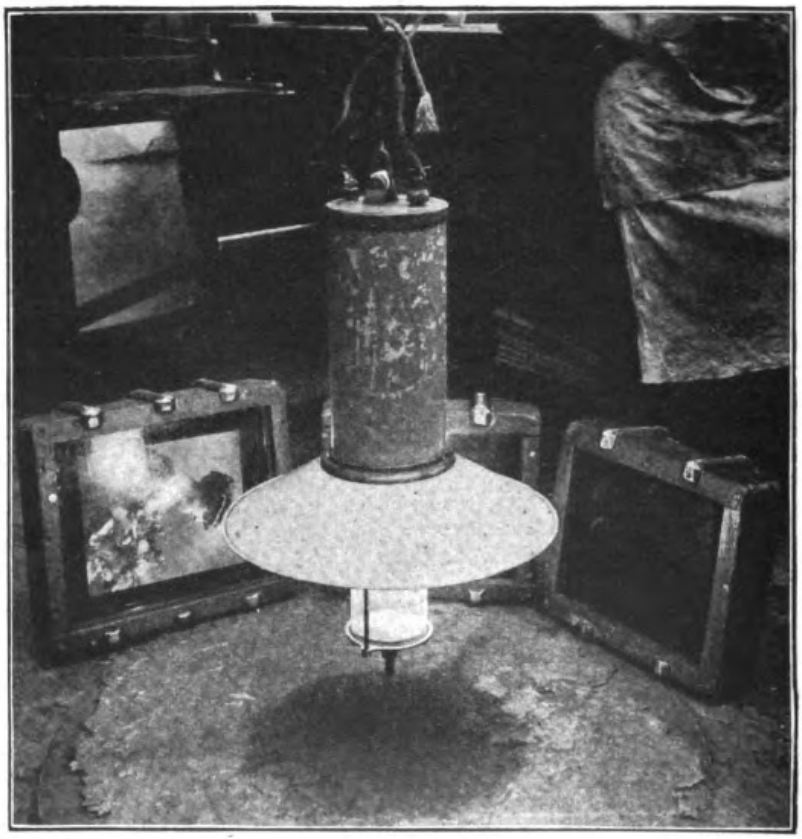


FIG. 8. — PRINTING FROM THE NEGATIVE BY ELECTRIC LIGHT UPON THE SENSITIZED COPPER PLATE.

Development is carried out in the usual manner, the negative is dried by the application of heat, and then it is ready for printing. This is the operation which transfers the image to the metal surface of the block. In the early days zinc was used for this purpose, but copper is now universally used. The metal is in the form of a thin sheet, and has a perfectly smooth surface. A piece of copper of the approximate size is taken, sensitized with a special solution, or, as it is called, "enamel." This is placed in a special printing-frame behind the negative, and exposed for a few minutes before a powerful electric light (as shown in Fig. 8). This process is akin to bromide printing in ordinary photography. At the same time the rulings of the screen, which are recorded upon the plate, also are transferred to the copper surface, so that once again the

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picture is broken up into a multitude of dots, each coinciding with that on the negative.

When printing is finished the copper plate is developed. Those parts of the enamel upon which the light has acted become insoluble, while those which are unaffected are soluble and disappear, leaving the bare surface of the copper exposed. Upon the completion of the developing process the plate is immersed in dye. The picture is then plainly visible upon the copper plate. It has now to be fixed, and this is carried out by the aid of heat. The operator picks up the plate by means of a pair of pliers and deftly moves it over a gas-burner, the image uppermost. As the copper becomes heated the enamel becomes "burned in," as it is called; that is to say, it becomes part and parcel of the copper surface. In this burning-in process a curious effect is noticeable. As the plate becomes heated the image fades away until nothing can be seen, only to reappear once more in an equally mysterious manner. When the image has become sufficiently strong it is whipped away from the gas-burner and permitted to cool. It is now ready for what is known as etching.

Etching may be described as the eating away of the exposed parts of the copper—*i.e.*, those parts which are not protected by the enamel. This work is carried out by means of an acid—a solution of perchloride of iron. Formerly the work was carried out by hand, in a manner akin to the development of a plate; but nowadays, in order to meet the needs of hustling commerce, mechanical etchers are employed. This machine (Fig. 9) comprises a trough the bottom of which is provided with a series of regularly-spaced jets. These jets are connected with a pipe which leads to an air-blower. The solution is poured into the tank until it covers the jets. The copper plate itself is placed in a device, and then capsized so as to bring the enamelled surface face to face with the solution. The machine is set going, and the constant blast of air blowing through the jets drives the solution against the surface of the copper, the agitation keeping the solution constantly up to its work.

The acid, coming into contact with the exposed portions of the copper surface, rapidly eats the latter away. It particularly attacks the regular rulings corresponding with the hair-lines of the screen. At the same time even the protected parts of the copper surface, where the enamel has been burned in, undergoes a certain amount of erosion, the extent of this action varying

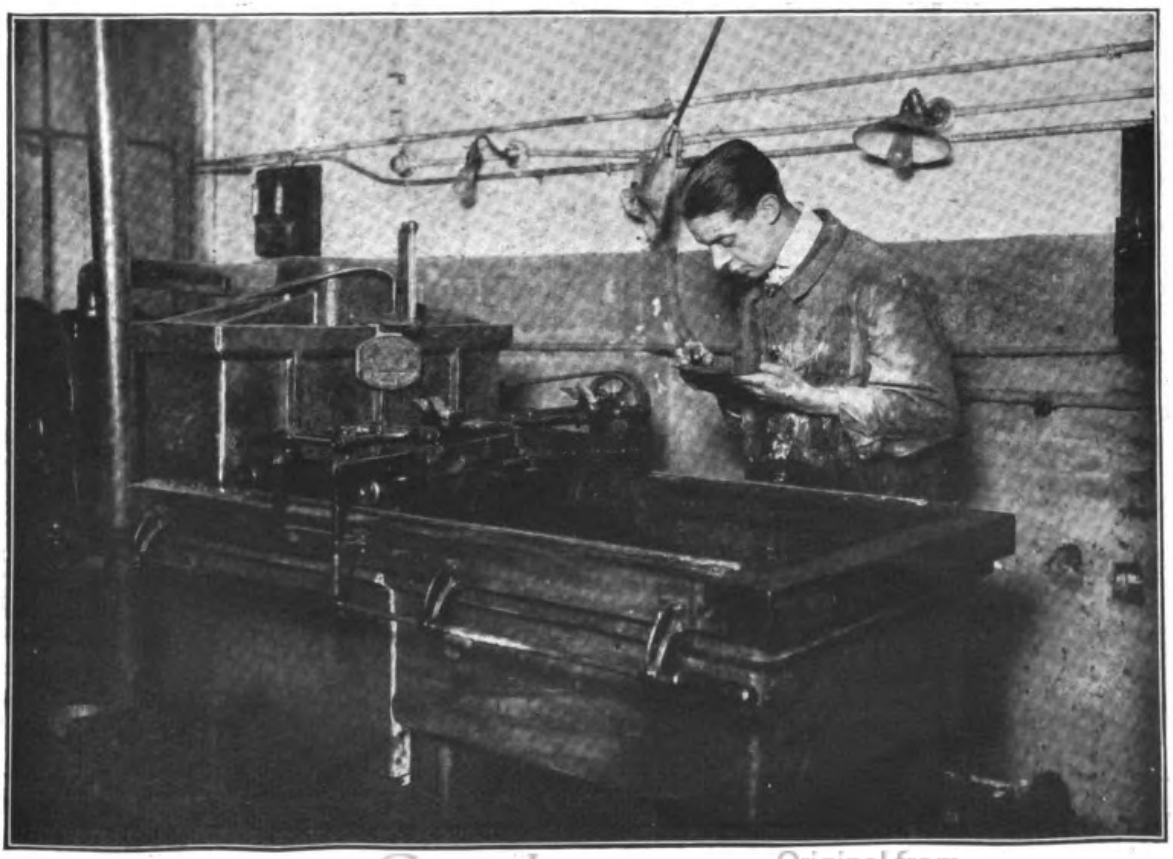


FIG. 9.—THE ETCHING MACHINE.

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according to the thickness of the enamel. Thus, in some places, where dead blacks are required, and where the thickness of the enamel is greatest, practically little or no eating away of the copper takes place. Similarly each tone and gradation in the image is eaten away proportionately.

When the etching is completed, and the plate is examined by the aid of a microscope, what was formerly the perfectly smooth surface of copper is seen to be broken up into a mass of equally-spaced dots (Fig. 10), caused purely and simply by the hair-lines of the screen which, reproduced upon the block, have been eaten completely away. Another peculiar fact will also be observed. The size of each dot, which represents a point of metal, varies in relation to its neighbour. In other words, the metal surface of each dot has been eaten away by the acid according to its relative value to the original photograph (Fig. 11). Where the whites are dead they have been eaten almost entirely away, while those relating to the darker tones have been scarcely touched. Each dot corresponds to a tone gradation in the picture.

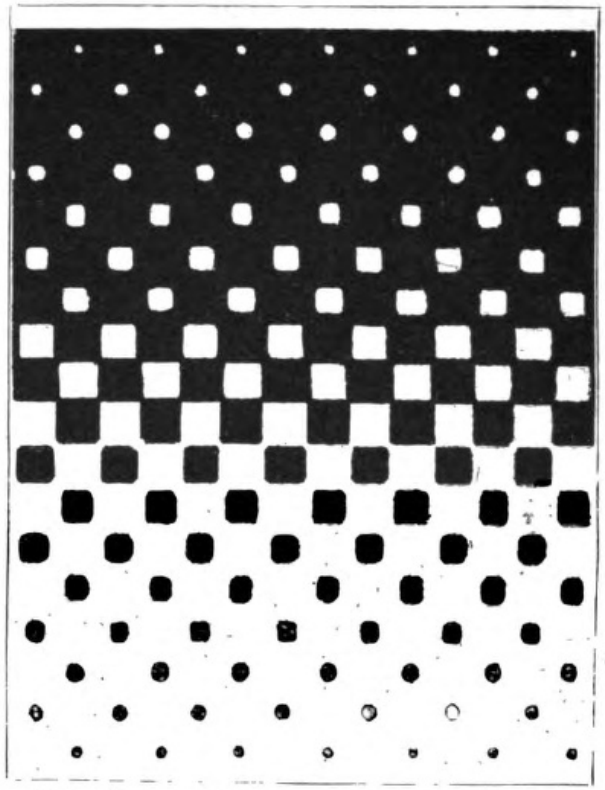


FIG. 10. — PORTION OF ETCHING, GREATLY MAGNIFIED TO SHOW THE GRADATION FROM SHADOWS TO HIGH LIGHT.

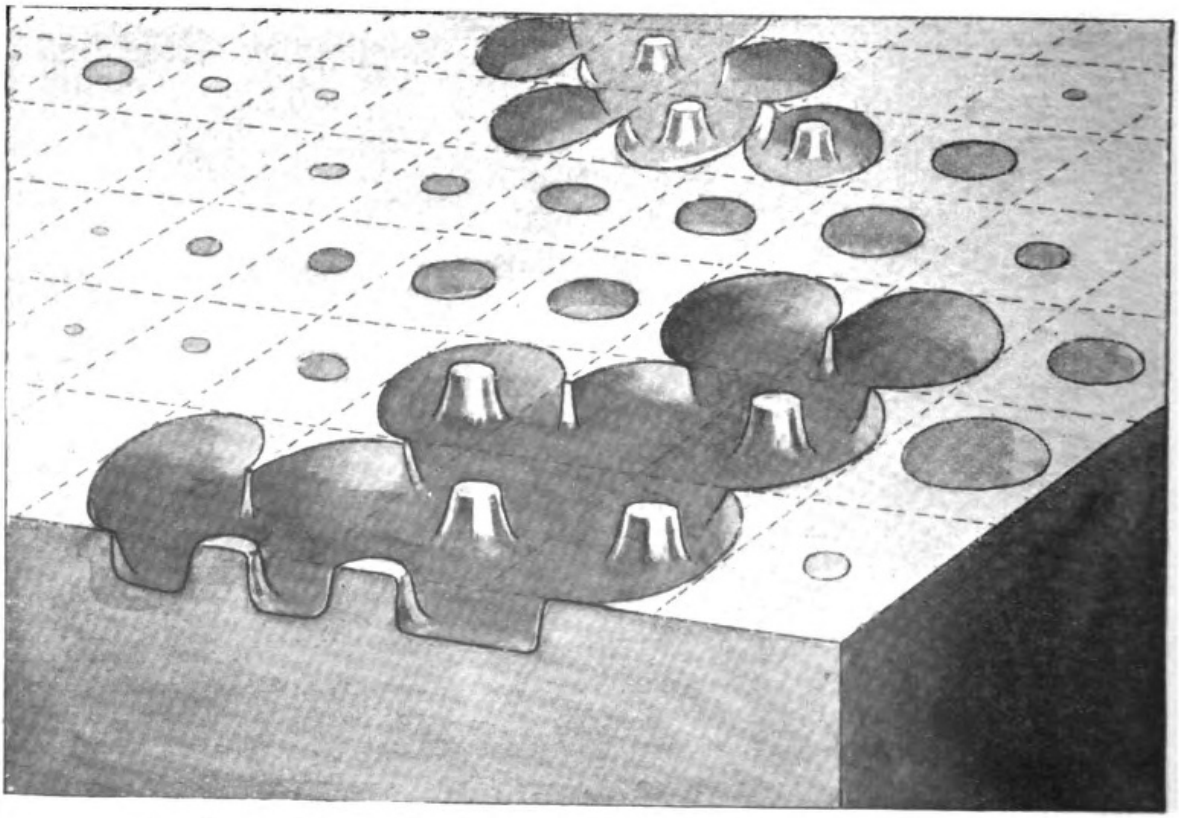


FIG. 11.—DRAWING OF A PORTION OF A BLOCK MAGNIFIED ONE HUNDRED TIMES, SHOWING HOW THE ACID HAS EATEN INTO THE SURFACE OF THE PLATE. THE DEEP DEPRESSION SHOWS THE LIGHT PORTIONS OF THE PICTURE AND THE SHALLOWS THE DARKER PARTS.

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But the etching is not so straightforward as it appears. If the process were dependent upon this treatment the resultant picture would be flat and entirely lacking life. Blacks would be greys, and whites would be dirty. It now has to pass through a phase known as "fine etching," and this has to be completed by hand labour. The plate of etched metal is laid upon the desk, and an artist goes over it carefully, protecting by aid of a special solution those parts which he desires should be preserved, so as to be brought up strongly. He also touches up the gradations and tones. This is the operation which takes time. In the case of a block which is required to be of the finest possible quality, anything up to forty or fifty hours may be put in upon the subject by the artist. In fact, if time is no object, the artist will be able to produce a block which is a distinct improvement upon the original, his skill enabling him to strengthen the weak parts of the picture and to weaken the denser portions, the ultimate result being soft and velvety in appearance.



FIG. 12. — THE HAND-ENGRAVER WORKING UPON THE PLATE.

When the artist has completed his duty the plate is re-immersed in the etching machine and subjected to another turn of the acid treatment.

If the block is to be ruled off merely by a squared line frame, it is ready for the later stages; but it may so happen that all the background has to be cut away. The copper plate accordingly is taken over by the hand-engravers, who, with their special tools, carefully cut away the metal around the subject (Fig. 12). It may be a bowl of flowers, or perhaps the figure of a lady. In each instance the process is the same, but the amount of work varies considerably. The engraver cuts a channel about a sixteenth of an inch in width and perhaps a fiftieth of an inch in depth.

All waste metal now has to be removed, and this is accomplished by a machine known as a router. The operator manipulates the machine so that the drill can cut along the channel indicated by the hand-engraver, the tool running along the outer edge of the engraver's cut, leaving the width of the latter available for fixing the plate to its wooden or metal base for printing. The wood upon which it is mounted to bring the face of the block level with the type among which it is placed is cut to size, the flat surface planed dead smooth, and the copper plate attached thereto by means of pins. The block is now submitted to the final test — proving. This may be done in either a hand or power-driven press. The block is rolled with ink and the pressure applied. Here the relation of the sizes of the dots produced by the meshing of the screen may be realized. Those which have not been eaten away, or only slightly so, receive a full quota of ink and the maximum pressure, coming up blackly on the paper; those which are eaten away to a fine point receive little ink and scarcely any impression, causing them to give a whitish effect upon the paper. All the varying sizes of the dots or pinnacles of metal between these two extremes receive the same quantities of ink but varying pressure, with the result that all gradations of tone, corresponding with the original picture, are reproduced. Each dot—the space between the intersecting lines of the screen—tells an individual story in ink, the whole making the photographic-facsimile effect. The prover compares the printed version with the original, and, satisfied with the result, passes the block on to the printing-room, where it is dropped into its appointed place, the machines are set going, and the picture appears in the present issue of THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

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# The Dagger

BY CHARLES D. STEWART

*Illustrated By F. GILLETT R.I.*

HARRIED by a stiff January gale, and lighted only by an occasional street-lamp, which emitted a sort of frosty glow upon the swift-passing particles of white, the village of Jonesboro' lay in a snowy mist, faintly illumined by the moon. It was not snowing; the sky was clear; but the wind was making new work of the dry snow which had been falling quietly for days. To the west, where the town ended in a graveyard, the blizzard was doing rare things amid the monuments which obstructed its course; new mounds were gradually rising, and every flat headstone was being backed up with a long, soft bolster of white. To the east, human habitation ended in the cottage of Amos Stone, who lived at the very edge of the town—just over the line, in fact, where he had most of the advantages of the small town without having to contribute his share in taxes. Everybody had evidently put out his light and gone to bed, except in the doctor's house. In that house a light was always burning.

Just as the church clock was striking midnight, its iron notes perishing suddenly on the winter blast, the green shutters of a window in the little cottage on the side away from the town opened cautiously, and a high-laced hunting-boot came forth. The booted leg was followed by its fellow; then the man, dagger in hand, let himself carefully down into two feet of snow. He stood a moment, peering at the country road, visible only a short distance as the endless wraith of drifting snow scurried across it. Then he advanced to the corner of the house and again stood listening. Again, again, again the clock struck, its cold-deadened note, strangely altered, ringing out the death-knell of Amos Stone. The moment seemed to belong to the bell; the man waited till the church should have finished speaking.

When the sound ceased, and night was his own again, the man leaped the low fence, almost buried in the drift, hurried across the road, and then, as he had planned, took to the field and struck out in the direction of the woods. It was a night when no man would willingly be out; yet he would not trust to the road. Country doctors battle with the weather at all hours of the night; and on the worst nights of all, it seems, farmers most frequently call for their help. The woods, and then the lake, would be best for him.

Once he was in the field and screened from all possible observation by the flying drift, he settled down to the really arduous task of lifting his feet high and planting his legs knee-deep at every step in the snow. It was just such a night as he had been waiting for. Before coming he had tested the footprints carefully, and found that it took hardly a

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minute for the deep holes to fill up and be completely erased from the swift-moving white surface.

It had been snowing for days. Then, as the skies became clear, a high wind came down from the north and began to pick up the snow and hurry it along, as the man had hoped. The lighter particles, flying as high as his head, enveloped him as in a thin fog; lower, the heavier burden of the wind made one continuous stream at his feet. The white surface smouldered snow-like smoke, and swept onward in a very conflagration of cold.

It was a night when little speed could be made; but there was no occasion for that. Everything had gone as he had planned, and all was well. He paused a while, and by the moonlight that came down from the clear spaces above he saw his track fill in and smooth over. Thus reassured, he kept on again toward the dark line of woods that showed its head over the white turmoil at the far edge of the field. He had dropped the dagger into the wide side-pocket of his canvas coat; it was still there. The big roll of bank-notes made a lump over his heart, and seemed to him to keep that part of his body noticeably warmer.

Before long he had reached the edge of the woods and entered the region of roaring, groaning trees. Here, in this double security, the walking was somewhat easier, though the snow was deep. He kept on by a familiar direction, and presently came to the lake, a place where, for spaces at least, there would be no tracks at all, or so he hoped. The ice had frozen two feet thick in still weather, and there were likely to be places where its smooth surface had been swept almost bare. He headed for such a wind-swept opening, and swung into a freer stride as he stepped on the solid surface.

Now, as he walked along more freely, his mind returned to the dagger. Something would have to be done with that. He had been thinking it over. It was a heavy weapon that he had made that autumn from an old brass-hilted sword-bayonet; he had broken it off to a convenient length and surreptitiously shaped it on a grindstone. The piece that had to be broken off he had buried deep in the loam at a corner of the field. The sword-bayonet had evidently been about the place for a long time. It had probably been used by some former tenant to cut corn, and many persons no doubt remembered it; therefore it would not do to have it ever come to light in this strangely-altered form. It should be buried, too. But how? The frost had gone four or five feet into the ground. A deep hole, beyond the reach of a plough, could not be dug except with pick and crowbar; and, besides, the marks of his labour could not be disguised at once, as in the ploughed field of summer.

He did not purpose to leave any marks behind him. He thought of hiding the dagger in the barn or in the house, but this plan also was unsatisfactory. Barns are struck by lightning and burn down; houses, too, catch fire, and then the metal-handled instrument, unless he recovered it first, and unobserved, would surely come to light. It was strange how hard it seemed to dispose finally of so small a thing.

The ice under him was two feet thick, and the earth was as hard as iron. To drop it into the lake, the only safe way, would require much work with ice-bar and hatchet.

Even as he thought of the impossibility, his heart jumped with the solution. That afternoon two men had been fishing through the ice. He had seen them persevering till sunset; then they took their ice-bar and tackle and went away. In that hole the ice would not have gained much thickness.

He cast about him in the middle of the lake, and it was not long before he found the location; he was helped in finding it by a small branch which had been set up slanting to hold the tackle and give notice when a fish pulled on the line. He turned his steps toward it at once; but before he arrived he found another hole a short distance from it. It was a large hole, about two feet in diameter; he might have stepped right into it had it not been for the little pile of chipped ice which had been thrown up in making it, and which made itself more prominent by causing a drift on its lee side. The little circle of water, not having risen in the hole to the general level of the ice, and being thus protected from the wind as by a small rampart, was frozen over as smooth as a pane of glass. Tapping it with the hilt of the dagger, he judged it was not yet very thick. With the point of the blade he pecked a hole in the middle. Soon he had the blade through. He enlarged the hole quickly now, using the heavy brass hilt as a hammer; and then, having thrown out the broken pieces, he let the dagger drop into the water.

A feeling of triumph, of secret power, came over him as he resumed his way homeward. The last clue was gone. Seventy feet down it was sunk, to lie for ever in the ooze at the bottom amid the tangle of water-weeds

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and the spongy, thick moss. It was shrewd work well done.

As he stepped along now toward the bare, rolling hills on the opposite shore he reviewed his work carefully from the moment he stepped out of his own bedroom window. His sister could not possibly have heard any noise that night, even though he had not been cautious. Old farm-houses are noisy on windy nights. There is a rattling of shutters, a clatter of loosened gutters, a general clamour of windows and doors, and the gusts whistling round corners and soughing under the eaves; it is anything but quiet. He might have left the house with any amount of noise, and his sister would not have noticed, even though she had not been sleeping. As little would she hear him when he raised the window and came in again. In the meantime his door had been locked on the inside.

He was safe. Every step of the trail was obliterated. With his own eyes he had seen it wiped out by the wind. He had gone and returned by the most unfrequented ways, across fields and through lonesome woods; and on such a night it was impossible to see a man at any great distance. It only remained for him to rise in the morning and pursue his usual round of duties about the barn. No one would ever think of suspecting him; there was not the least reason. Certainly no mortal was aware of it except himself; none knew the plans and processes that had been taking form in his secret mind. And even if there should be suspicion, there was not the least clue to connect him. Later—possibly in the middle of the summer—he would sell his crop and move; tenant farmers are always moving. But this he could plan at his leisure.

Thus meditating, and mightily relieved by the extinction of that accusing dagger, he reached the shore again and climbed over the rise; then as he neared his house he skirted round to the rear side. Once more in sight of the window from which the trail had begun, he stopped and looked close. Not a vestige remained of the deep holes his boots had made in the snow. The virgin page of Nature bore not a record of his passing. He turned and looked back on the more recent footsteps. The snow was steadily sifting into these tracks, too. He raised the window, climbed in, and shut it after him.

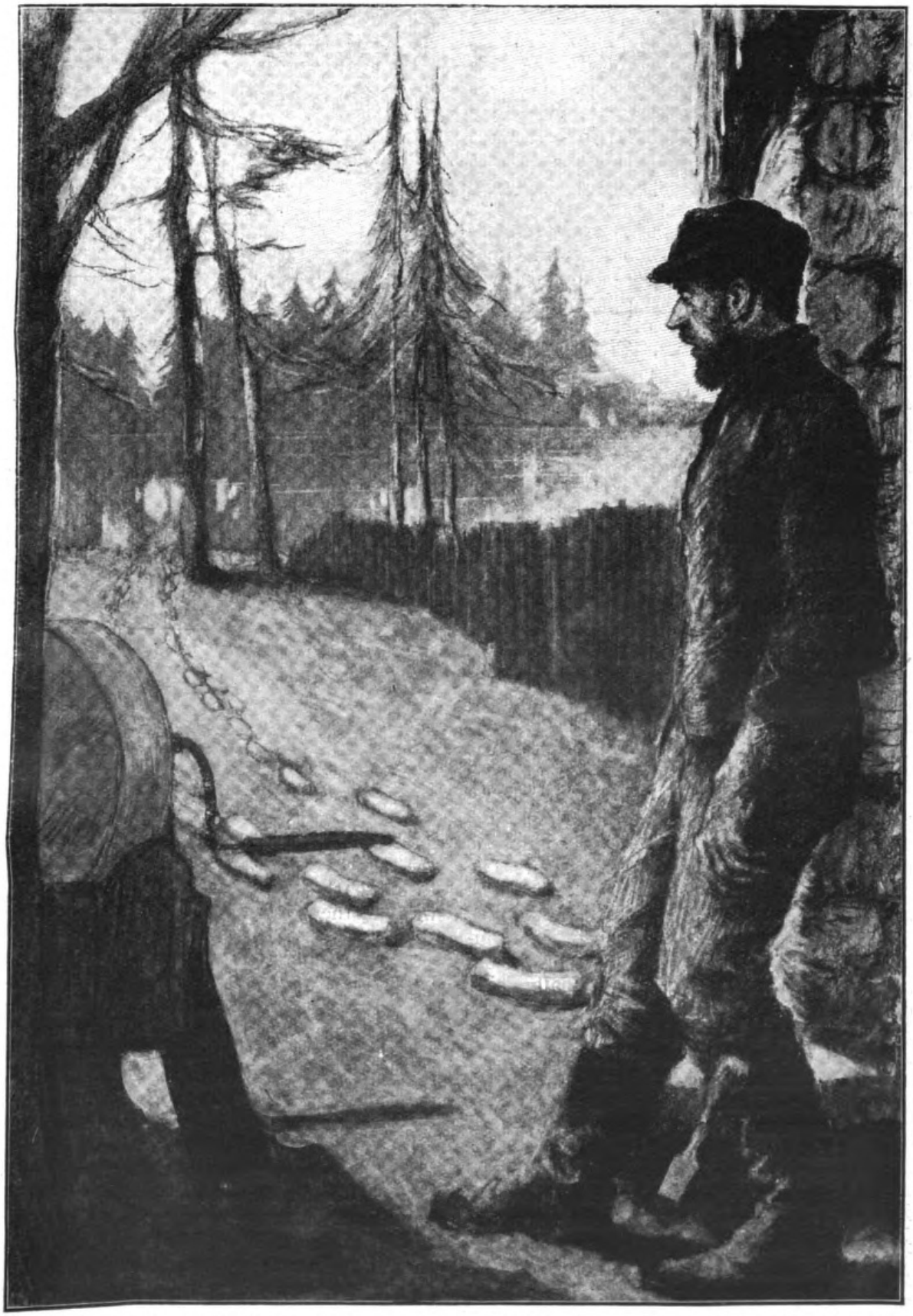
For a few days the murder made the sensation that might have been expected in the town of Jonesboro'. It was made much of by the semi-weekly local paper, and it concluded in proper moral style with advice to "our town authorities" respecting suspicious characters, and reflections upon the inadvisability of keeping large sums of money in the house. The verdict of the coroner's jury, which found that the deceased met his death at the hands of parties unknown, gave some material for the next issue, after which there was little to record—only an occasional report that no clue had yet been discovered. As a subject of gossip the topic was worn out in a few days, after which it was referred to only incidentally. Amos Stone, whose life was somewhat solitary and peculiar, had been killed by a "burglar," possibly a tramp. Suspicion did not naturally direct itself to a farm; and Joe Dill, feeding his stock, milking his cows, and felling trees on the wood-lot, was as little thought of in that connection as was the average citizen.

The murderer, living a mile and a half out in the country, and having to go to town only once a week in winter, when he could get his supplies and return as promptly as he chose, found that it had not even been necessary for him to dissemble. Except on one morning, when he leaned over a fence and indulged in vague speculation with a neighbour, he hardly needed to mention the matter at all. His shrewd policy was to say nothing, a course which, in his vocation, was easy enough to follow, until finally the thing had "blown over" and had become long-past history. After that there was nothing for him to do except at times to tell himself again that Stone was "a despisable mortal, anyway," with no real use for life or money, now simply dead, and little loss. That summer he would get the crops started, and maybe sell out the future harvest and his implements. Perhaps if he had an advantageous offer for his implements, he would go before that time.

January passed, February passed, and March brought thoughts of spring ploughing. It had been a winter of steady cold, and there had not been even the usual January thaw; but with the first days of spring a decided warmth came from the sun. The afternoon rays ate slantingly under one side of deep ruts and began to honeycomb the clay-stained, yellowish drifts along the road. Then one afternoon came a warm wind, followed by a more decided thaw.

On that day, toward evening, he had occasion to go round to the south side of the house to use the grindstone, which was kept under a tree so that it would not dry out and harden in the summer sun. As he turned the corner of the house he came to a sudden stop. What he saw caused the

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"THE FOOTSTEPS STOOD UP FOUR OR FIVE INCHES IN HEIGHT, AS IF THEY HAD BEEN EMBOSSED UPON THE FACE OF NATURE—A DOUBLE ROW OF THEM, GOING AND COMING."

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chisel to drop from his hand, as if all the forces of his body were concentrated in the one act of looking. Beginning at his bedroom window, and leading off to the thin line of trees that bordered the lake, was a line of raised footsteps; they stood up about four or five inches in height, as if they had been embossed upon the face of Nature—a double row of them, going and coming.

Fool that he had been! He now remembered having seen such footsteps in other spring thaws. If he had only thought! He remembered now what the farmers do in Illinois and Iowa, and in other places where there are no rivers or lakes. They harvest the deep snow in winter, put it into their hay-presses, and squeeze it down till all the air is out of it; and in the summer it does not thaw. So he had done with his weight in the hunting-boots. It was all because the snow had been deep. And there his footsteps stood as the lighter snow subsided, and on their tops was the firm impress of his foot, heel and sole!

His first impulse was to hurry for the shovel. But that would not destroy the trail; it would only make it more noticeable. And there was a mile and a half of it, too. It ran from his place to the shore, across the lake, and thence through the woods and across untrodden fields. Oh, that he had gone by the road—at least part of the way by the road!

Suddenly recollecting himself, and realizing that he must not do his thinking in public, he cast a glance about him, picked up the chisel, and went back to the barn. The carpentry had ceased to be of interest; he sat down now to figure out his chances.

How long had these footsteps been prominent? It had begun to thaw about noon, since when the snow had been gradually going down. Possibly it had not been long since it reached the level of his boot-marks. Evidently no one had discovered them yet at the other end, at the dead man's window, unless, perhaps, the officers were on their way now. If so, they would be here before long—in a little while.

The barn-doors were open to the west; the sun was already turning red as it verged toward the horizon. The weather was still mild, and here was hope. Here was a big chance in his favour. Twelve hours of darkness, twelve hours of further thawing. If the men were not here before long, he could see his way clear till the sun came up again, possibly for ever. It all depended upon the weather. The tall footsteps had already shown signs of being conquered about the edges.

Some time after dusk he arose and went soberly about his work. The cows that night were not well milked. After supper he hunted up a book and began to read. At nine his sister took her lamp and went to bed. He still sat in the kitchen; he was interested in reading. But when she was gone he did not turn the pages. Periodically he took a match and went to read the thermometer, which hung outside the kitchen door. Fate rested on the point marked freezing. When he had looked at it just after supper it registered fifty degrees, and that was eighteen degrees above the interesting mark. At nine it was down ten degrees; there were only six degrees to spare. Shortly after twelve—he was making his trips more frequently now—the mercury was at freezing. For a while he stood gazing at that shining thread of life, then he put the dead match in his pocket, and went in and stood in the middle of the kitchen floor. He had already pulled down the blinds and turned the lamp lower. He stood as in a trance, thinking it over, trying to arrive at some advisable course of action. What was the best move to make? Every plan was halted against some unconquerable "if."

Now would be the time to make his escape, *if* he only knew that it would become necessary. To run away, though, might be the very worst move he could make. That might prove his undoing; it would fasten the guilt upon him, and then he would have only the chances of a fugitive. It was not advisable to do that while there was still doubt as to whether they would suspect him. There was still a chance.

And yet another day, he reasoned, could hardly pass without somebody's attention being attracted by the other end of that trail. The house, now tenantless and deserted, was still sufficiently in the public mind to draw reminiscent glances from those who went to town by that much-frequented road. And there in the yard were those strange footsteps leading up to the dead man's window!

But to-morrow might bring a more decided thaw. The footprints might not be noticed for several hours, even as they had not been that afternoon. Then the sun might have time to obliterate the trail, and he would be safe for all time. There was the chance. To run would only call attention to himself. It was better to wait a while longer and see what became of the chance.

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When he again turned up the light for a moment it was three o'clock. Time had flown. Suddenly he put on his cap and stepped out. He went to the rear of the house and scraped about with his foot until it struck against one of the upstanding prints. He kicked it with his toe. It was as hard as iron. He got down on his knees and put his hand on it. The four or five inches were a tremendous height to contemplate. It was glazed and slippery, having thawed slightly on the surface before freezing. He could feel the record on top of it, heel and sole. In desperation now, he gave a harder kick with his heel, which broke off the top of it; then he went along kicking right and left. When one broke off bodily he picked it up and threw it as far as he could. It was a useless thing to do; but this was all the conclusion at which he had arrived.

The mood did not last long; he went inside again, for it was necessary for him to go to bed. In the morning, if his sister should ask questions, he could say that he had fallen asleep in the kitchen. In bed, however, he did not sleep. Now he was making hope out of shreds and patches. Possibly that trail was not continuous. In the thinner snow it might have failed to make record for considerable stretches, and this, *if* they tried to follow it, might delay them till the thaw had done its work. In the morning, if nothing happened by nine or ten o'clock, he intended to set his mind at rest upon this point.

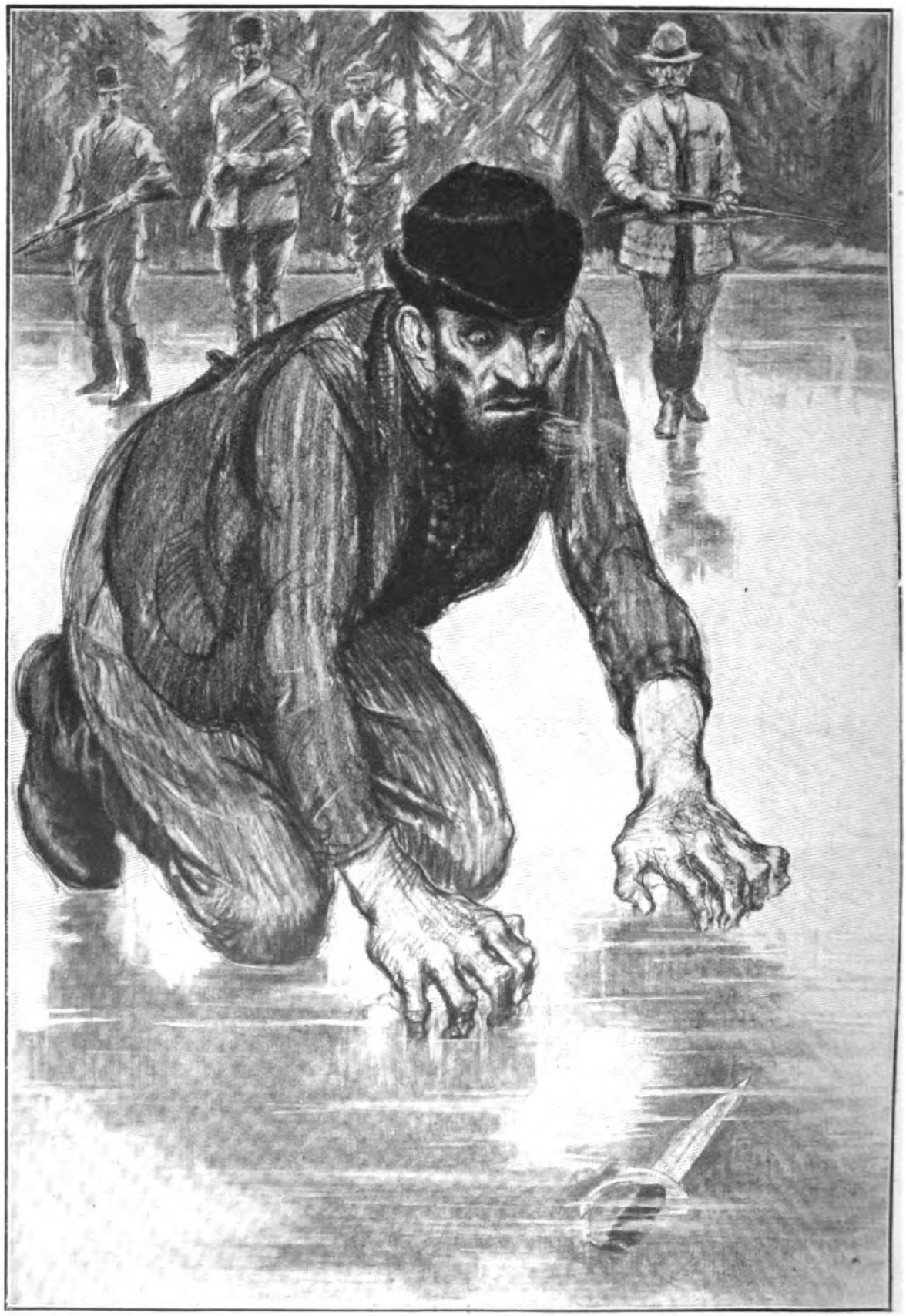
The sun came up in a sky that was almost clear, though the air was still cold. While he milked and curried and fed, he was watching and waiting; the sudden movement of a horse or a cow startled him. It was absolutely necessary, however, to do his work as usual. When the morning's work was done, he released the cows' heads from the stanchions and turned them out to drink; then he sat down in sight of the door and waited a while longer. Suddenly he rose, pulled his cap on tighter, and set out.

He walked along as far from the trail as possible, with no evident relation to it, but keeping it in sight. Only when it seemed to grow fainter did he go closer to investigate. In White's wood-lot, a small stronghold of Nature made up of unarable hummock and hollow, he stopped suddenly and dodged behind a tree. White's little girl and some children from the neighbouring farm were having rare fun. Attracted by the bright, invigorating weather and the call of spring in the air, they had gone forth in search of adventure, and they had found it in a blind hollow which was now floored with ice.

The game was to cross on the top of his raised footsteps! The novelty of this new-found altitude in walking seemed to hold a charm for the children; and as the tops were somewhat slippery, it was just such a test of skill as afforded them an exciting game. He watched them as they stretched their little legs to take the grown-up steps. One little girl in a red coat was particularly obnoxious; whenever she missed her footing and fell the woods rang with her laughter. As he skulked behind the tree Joe Dill's teeth clenched at these sudden outbursts; they were advertising him all too loudly. Could they find nothing to do but meddle with his trail? He was strongly impelled to rush in and disperse them, but he dared not. Their little tongues were dangerous. Even as it was, they might carry the news home. While he was thinking this, the little girl gave him an anxious spell. She was thinking of going home at once with her little brother, who had fallen and hurt his lip; but finally she decided it was not necessary. With a sigh of relief he again went on, keeping the tree between himself and the children till he was safe from observation; then he skirted round to the trail again. It was as plain as ever all the way to the lake.

At the lake's edge it stopped, for a short distance, anyway. Thanks to the wind, there were stretches that had been swept bare that night. Or else the light covering that remained had melted, and then frozen over clear and clean. Welcome sight! As he looked down into the ice of the shallow margin he was aware for a moment of the beauty of the pebbled bottom. Imbedded in the crystal beneath his feet were inaccessible stones of pink and green and yellow, their beauties set out in a sort of magnified clearness of colour and detail; it made him think of the glass marbles he played with when he was a boy. Yes—for a distance, at least, the chain of guilt was broken. But how far? About two hundred feet farther on the traces appeared again. But still farther there was another clear stretch; and then the steps were rather faint. Hope mounted higher as he thought over this state of affairs. He reasoned it out. Others had come down to the lake in the course of the winter; hence there must be other trails leading to and from the edge. Naturally. If his own trail were lost, many would have to be tried before the right one was taken up again. It might take some time for the right one to be followed to its

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"THERE IT WAS, A FOOT FROM HIS HAND, AND YET BEYOND HIS GRASP!"

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tell-tale conclusion—his window—and this even though it remained frozen. But—and he now raised his gaze to heaven—the sun was growing warmer as it rose higher. It promised a more decided thaw. His hopes grew brighter as it rose. It all depended, however, upon a considerable break in the trail. At intervals the tracks reappeared vividly where the snow had formed a ridge; again they were so inconspicuous that he tried to think they would be discernible to no one but himself.

He kept on, in hope that it would be completely lost. Thus, finally, he came to the hole in the middle. And then Fate stared him in the face as he looked down into that little frozen pool.

At first he was paralyzed and enchained with superstitious fear. For *how* could that dagger, which he himself had dropped into clear water, be there suspended, as it were, in the new-formed crystal ice? But there it was, every detail of its brass handle and the very blood upon it standing out in glazed brightness like a picture newly made. He put his hand down as if to convince himself; the solid ice stopped his fingers a foot away. Thus far and no farther! It was the dagger itself. His nails slid vainly over the slippery surface. He could only sit and look at it. It seemed suddenly to be as a crucifix, a bloody crucifix, held up before his guilty gaze. The very sun seemed to direct its attention here, and shed dazzling light upon this showcase of his crime.

This first thrill of superstitious awe was hardly dispelled by his gradual perception of the means by which this had been brought about. The two fishermen he had seen catching small perch had used only one hole. A short distance away, in order to keep their fish alive and fresh, they had chopped a deep basin in the two feet of ice, and then punctured a hole in the bottom, through which the water could rise. Here they had thrown the fish as they were caught. It was into this ice-bowl that he had broken and dropped the evidence of his guilt; and then it had frozen solid.

Nothing less than an axe could remove it in any reasonable time; that would mean a trip back to the house. And it would not do, anyway, to be seen working here, for fishing was now illegal. If it were only night! But even as he thought this he heard the voices of men in the distance and the baying of hounds.

As he looked up a group was just emerging from the woods which edged the shore—men with guns. Rifles! Now they were following the trail; it was leading them straight out to the hole! His prompting was to fly; but a sudden and hurried disappearance would not do, for he had already attracted their attention. Besides, how could he go and leave that dagger there?

They were keeping on in his direction! Soon they would be out to the middle, and then they would cast a glance at the hole, as hunters and fishermen always do. Desperately his fingers clawed at the ice again. They slid to and fro. It enchained him. It held him irresolute. Visions of picks and axes and crowbars trooped before his distracted fancy. He had no means of defence except the dagger. There it was, a foot from his hand, and yet beyond his grasp, the glassy exhibition of his crime!

Nearer they came, straight on, the men talking low, and the hounds eager for a hunt. Then he summoned his self-control. Slowly he slouched away as carelessly as possible. But the dagger had held him too long. He had not half reached the shore, going faster now, when he heard the dread word of law, "Halt!" Turning about, he saw the four guns holding him. Cowering, he stood and waited while the guns advanced.

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# Natural Stereoscopy.

## By LOUIS BRENNAN, C.B.

**In the following article Mr. Louis Brennan, the well-known inventor of the Brennan Torpedo, the Gyroscopic Railway, Gyroscopic Control of Aeroplanes, and other inventions, revives a most interesting and long-forgotten art.**

FEW are aware that it is possible by the eyesight alone to obtain stereoscopic effects from suitable pairs of pictures placed side by side as on a stereoscopic slide, although this was the very method introduced by Wheatstone when he invented stereoscopy in 1838.

Dual drawings of cubes and other geometric solids, to be viewed direct, were exhibited by him at the Royal Society in that year, but little or no attention was given to the subject until the stereoscope appeared with its photographic slides, when at once a tremendous sensation was aroused, and immediately stereoscopes in many forms and at all prices were to be found everywhere, their popularity lasting for more than one generation, and then waning gradually away down to the present day, when they are hardly ever to be met with.

The principle on which stereoscopy is based is that owing to the distance separating the eyes, small though it be, a different image of everything within their scope is impressed upon the retina of each organ, and these images, or rather the sensations caused by them on being conveyed to the brain by the optic nerves, there combine, or are superimposed in such a manner as to form a mental image possessing the qualities of length, breadth, and depth, thereby giving a substantial or solid appearance to everything under view.

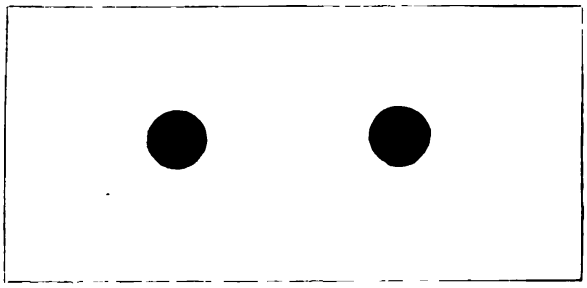


Fig. 1.—On looking steadily for a few seconds midway between the two spots, four will be seen, the outer two of which will recede from, and the inner two approach, each other until the latter coalesce, forming altogether three spots. This shows the result to be aimed at with all the pictures which, when united as in the case of the central spot, give the unmistakable appearance of solidity, distance, and atmosphere to all views.

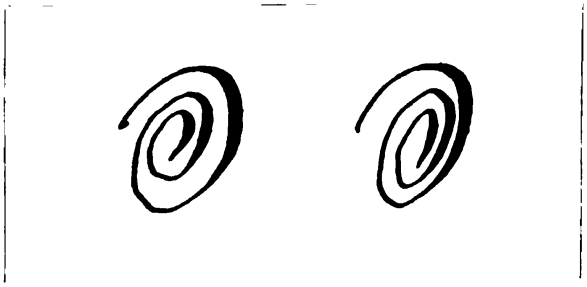


Fig. 2.—Two very roughly drawn spirals of different sizes which stereoscope to form one, that appears to stand out from the paper.

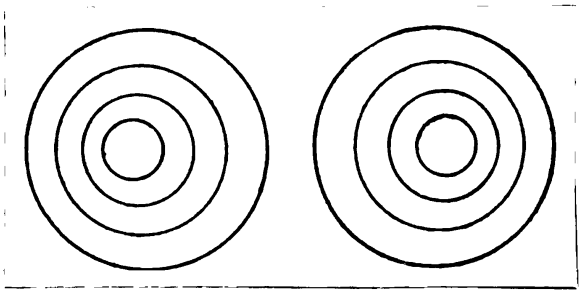


Fig. 3.—Two sets of circles which combine to one set, giving the appearance of a hollow tube with rings inside.

The stereoscope itself, as almost everybody knows, is an instrument consisting of lenses or mirrors so arranged as to direct each eye on to separate pictures of the same scene, and it is because these pictures are taken from different points of view, corresponding more or less to the distance of the eyes apart, that on being conveyed to the brain they give the same appearance of solidity that would be experienced if the actual things were looked upon direct.

The reasons why instrumental stereoscopy took the place of the natural method, and ousted it altogether from the field, are not difficult to imagine. In the first place nothing whatever had to be learnt or practised in order to enjoy the stereoscope; in the second no one realized the vast possibilities of the natural method; and last, though

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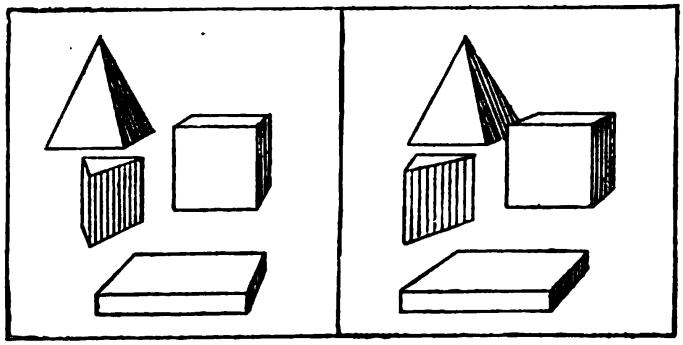


Fig. 4.—A group of geometric solids two of which appear, when stereoscoped, to be in front of the surface of the picture and two behind.

improvements leading up to its reproduction in the printer's press culminating quite lately in all the glories of colour, had to be made before natural stereoscopy was ripe for general adoption.

Perhaps the principal advantage of stereoscoping by the eyes alone lies in the absence of all trouble. One is quite untrammelled by an instrument. There are no slides to insert, no focusing to be done, and no holes to look through.

perhaps not least, it was to nobody's interest to push direct stereoscopy, whereas considerable profit was to be made by the manufacture and sale of the instruments.

And so natural stereoscopy was pushed to one side, and has been overlooked and forgotten for seventy-six long years, while the importance of a truly great discovery, an actual expansion of the power of sight, was unrecognized and ignored, and its place given to a mere toy of only limited

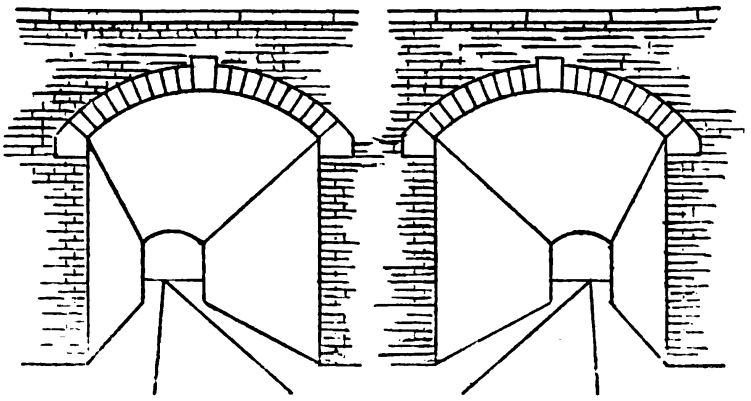


Fig. 5.—Archway, showing rails disappearing over the horizon miles away. Note that the resulting image shows the rails going straight away instead of to the left and right.

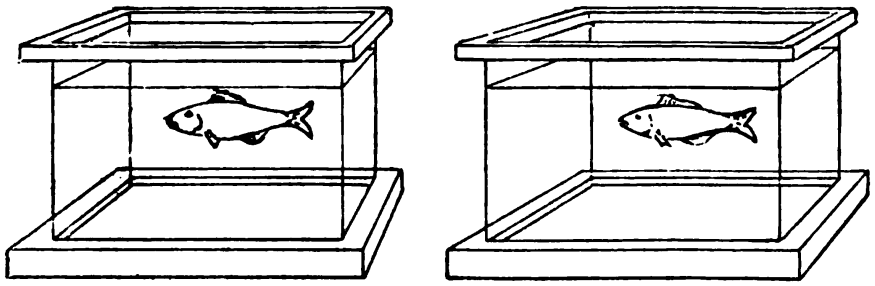


Fig. 6.—Fish in aquarium. A pretty illustration of solidity and transparency.

The views are simply held in the hand or turned over in the pages of a book or magazine, or hung upon the walls like ordinary pictures and examined by the eyesight alone, aided, of course, if necessary, by such glasses as are usually worn.

beauty and little or no utility.

It must be remembered, however, that photography, without which it was impossible to make any real progress, was in its infancy, and a long series of discoveries, inventions, and

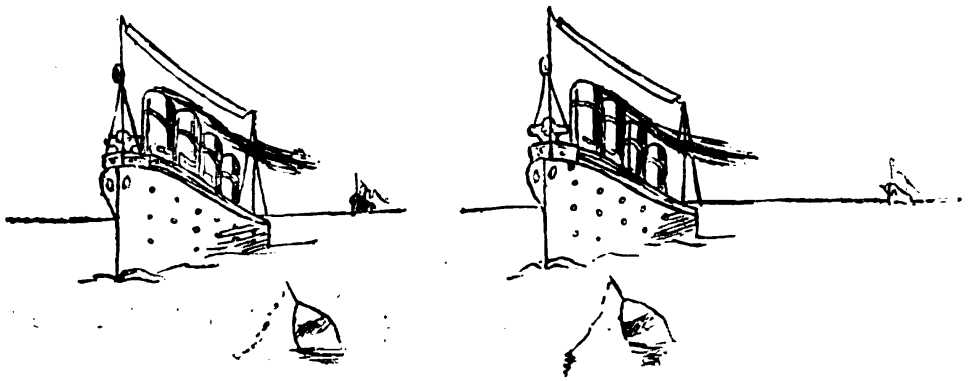


Fig. 7.—Destroyer. Drawn by judgment, with only a few rough measurements, to show what can be done by hand.

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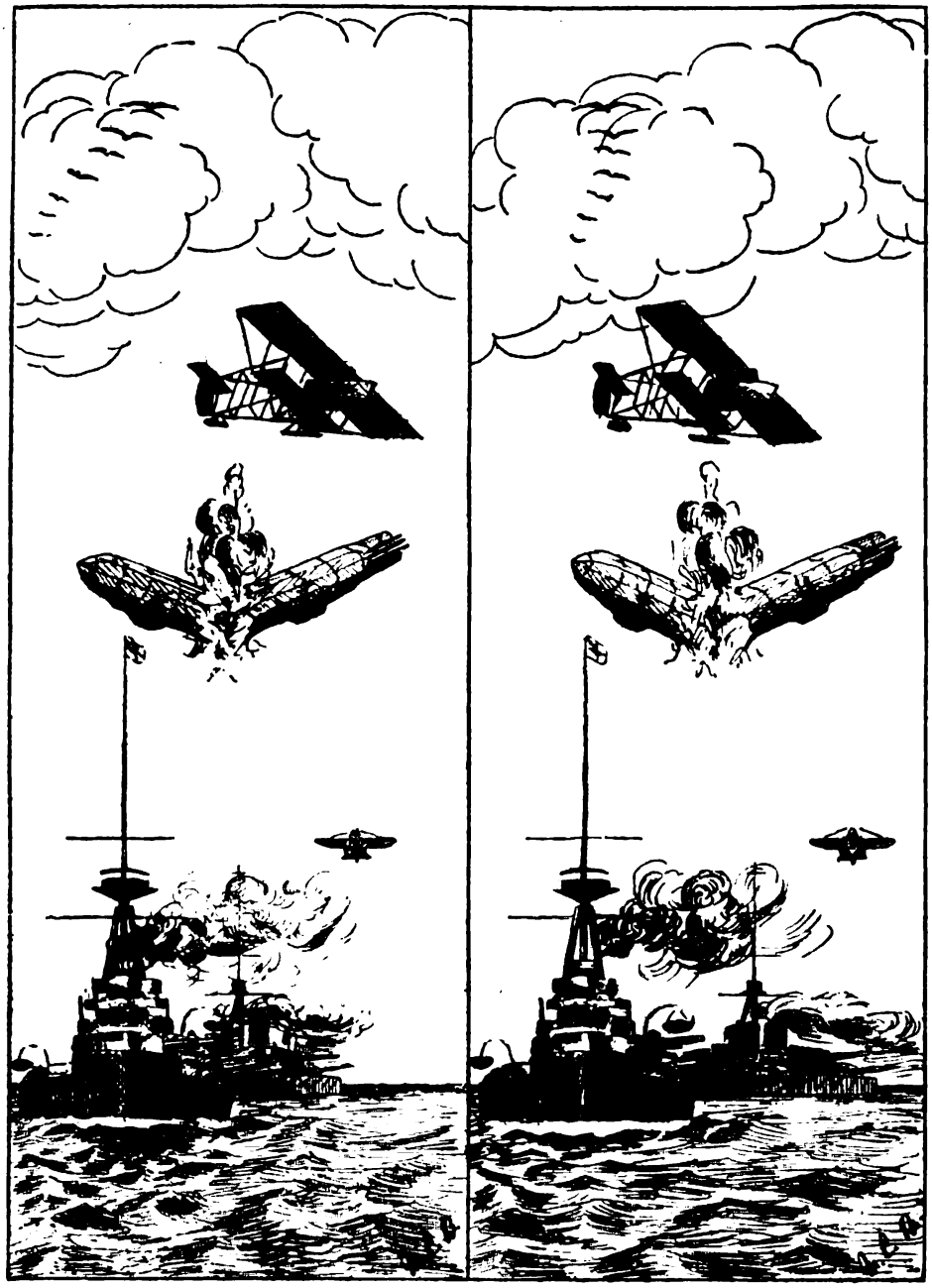


Fig. 8.—Battle at sea. Drawn with rough measurements, but remarkable as showing the relative distances of all objects, from the biplane some distance out in front of the picture to the clouds, one behind the other in the extreme distance.

Again, the pictures may be much larger than can be used with a stereoscope. I myself can stereoscope dual pictures, each view being six inches wide, and, as this power is steadily increasing, I am confident that pictures of almost any width that can be seen without moving the head can be combined by further practice. As a matter of fact, it was only quite recently that I found it possible to make the eyes diverge so as to take in larger pictures than the ordinary slides, instead of looking parallel or converging as they have been accustomed to do. In a vertical direction there is no limit except the ordinary range of vision to the length of picture that can be stereoscoped.

A curious fact is that on looking into a shop window in which a large number of slides are displayed they all appear to be stereoscoped when seen collectively in a most wonderful manner, and it is also true that whenever the eyes fall upon a slide by chance they unconsciously stereoscope it in an instant.

Owing to the advent of colour photography, it will now be easy to produce effects which for beauty and realism will be astonishing. Outdoor scenes will have all the appearance of being miniature bits of actual nature, while such things as the smaller animals, insects, flowers, and moderate-sized objects of any kind which can be represented of natural size will appear to be the very things themselves.

As the result of my experience in this matter and the foregoing considerations, I feel impelled to write this paper and to point out the importance of the subject, not only for the purpose of giving pleasure, but as a means of education by the illustration of works of all kinds with a lucidity otherwise unapproachable.

To the objection sure to be raised that it would be odd to print two pictures of the same subject side by side in books, etc., the reply is that, as the result will give much more satisfaction than one large one,

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Fig. 9.—This and the two following subjects are ordinary stereoscopic photographs, from which the reader, with a little practice, can obtain the most beautiful effects.

a distinct advantage will be achieved by publishing them.

The art of stereoscoping naturally is very easily acquired by commencing with spots and small pictures, and rapidity of progress is assured by the fascination of practising it.

By commencing with the pair of spots (Fig. 1), an idea will be obtained of the result to be aimed at. On looking steadily at both of them for a little time, four dots will be seen, the outer pair receding from each other and the inner pair approaching until they coalesce, forming a single spot midway between the other two.

When this result has been attained, the succeeding pictures should be looked at steadily in the same way, and it will be found that when they are exactly superimposed the stereoscopic effect of a solid object will be unmistakable.

It greatly adds to the ease of bringing the pictures together if the experimenter will imagine himself as looking *through* the pictures at something at a distance, such as the bottom of the cellar or the other side of the road.

When once a pair of pictures have been stereoscoped it is only a matter of a small amount of practice for a few minutes at a time for a week or two in order to be able to stereoscope ordinary slides; for wider pictures it



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will, of course, require more practice. But different people vary greatly in aptitude in acquiring facility, and many will find that they possess it almost at the first attempt.

A method which I have found very satisfactory, as it affords a means of ascertaining how one is getting on, is to cut a slide in halves and place them on the table side by side, and then, while they are stereoscoped by the eyes, to separate them slowly until the limit is reached at which the effect can be obtained. A measure now taken of their distance apart from centre to centre, or say left-hand edge to left-hand edge, gives the maximum limit of one's capabilities at the time.

In spare moments when slides are not at hand two coins or other flat objects placed on the table may be practised with, but, of course, no stereoscopic effect must be looked for.

Very rough sketches (such as the spirals in Fig. 2) in pen and ink or pencil, if only approximately alike, can be stereoscoped with really marvellous results, and will serve not only the purposes named, but to show the extraordinary power of the brain to adapt differing images to each other.

As a guide to attaining desired results, it will be well to remember that all similar objects in the foregrounds of the two pictures are nearer together from picture to picture, irrespective of their positions laterally or vertically, than are objects at a distance, and the same rule applies to every point on each object.

With very little practice one can make quite presentable pictures by judgment and a few rough measurements, and it will be found that really beautiful effects can be obtained by the exercise of a little ingenuity, and especially with the help of colour.

The examples given with this article progress in difficulty. If the reader will commence with the two spots, and gradually work up to the photographs at the end, he will soon discover that he is opening for himself a new world of entertainment, and one which he can enlarge for himself to any extent.





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# "ALLAH KNOWS BEST"

## ("WALLAHU d'ALAM")

## A CHESS STORY

By

RAYMUND ALLEN

*Illustrated by G. Henry Evison*

A RAIN-LADEN gust of wind swept blustering into the Strand from a side street and, with a sudden wrench, turned inside-out the umbrella with which Jack Burnside was struggling to shelter the girl who clung to his arm.

"*What* a climate!" he exclaimed, with feeling.

The girl answered with a laugh and looked up at her *fiancé* with a face whose colour was heightened to a healthy red by the buffeting of the weather, her eyes dancing with a happiness that was not to be dimmed by any such trifle as an unseasonable squall in June. Her high spirits were infectious, and Jack Burnside laughed back at her as he reduced the rebellious umbrella once more to reason.

"Your hat, Lena, stands the weather better than my temper. Let's go and get tea at some place where we can talk without having our words blown down our throats."

He led her to a small *café*, where the hush from the ruffling wind gave a grateful sense of comfort. The click of a game of dominoes sounded from a corner, and there were chess-boards set out on some of the tables in readiness for the customers who, later in the evening, might be expected to fill up the room. At this hour, however, there was no difficulty in finding a table out of earshot for quiet voices, and, when the waitress who brought their tea had retired again behind her counter, they were able to talk without fear of being overheard.

"Sugar, Jack? No, of course not! Cream, but no sugar—I must remember, or I shall be 'giving the show away,' as you call it, on our honeymoon. And now tell me all you have been doing. Tell me how you are getting on with Messrs. Bosford and Tunning."

"Bosford and Tunning? Fraudulent rascals! I am not getting on with them at all. I left them finally this morning."

The girl looked at him with a tinge of anxiety in her expression.

"I couldn't help it, Lena. They *are* rascals, and it was bound to come, sooner or later. This morning Bosford wanted me to lend a hand in one of their shady transactions, and when I refused he said that 'if I wanted to come the lily-white saint over the firm' I had better clear out at once—and I did."

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"Then what is the position now?"

"The position is 'where you was' or worse, because this won't make it any easier to get a job. The position is just this—that I am a recently-admitted solicitor who has chucked his first managing clerkship and whose total capital and credit amount to somewhere about five pounds. If you were a sensible girl you would cry off our engagement."

"Sense was never my strong point," she answered, with a confident smile. "But what about the Morton partnership? Is there really no chance?"

"My dear girl, you forget the condition. Where can I get a thousand pounds in two months, 'or at all,' as we say in pleadings?"

Her optimism was not to be damped. "Something else is sure to turn up. I feel certain you are going to get on—by hook or by crook."

"It would have been by crook if I had stayed with Bosford and Tunning."

Her manner sobered for a moment to a sweet seriousness.

"Don't worry, dear boy; you know I would wait for you all my life." He thanked her with his eyes, and she added, with a quick return to her lighter mood, "But, meanwhile, you must let me talk pots and pans and curtains, and settle what colour the drawing-room carpet is to be, and where the piano is to go."

The waitress came to remove the tea-tray and replaced the chess-board. Lena began to set up the pieces. "Let me see if I can remember where they have to go. I wish we had as much money as you can play chess."

"You stole that joke from *Punch*," Jack criticized.

"Well, I never pretended I got it honestly," she retorted; "but 'if you want to come the lily-white saint over the firm' you may send an acknowledgment."

Her merry spirit triumphed over the blankest of prospects, and for an hour they gave themselves up to the weaving of day-dreams.

None the less it was with an anxious mind that he returned a little later to the same table, after they had made an affectionate parting in the shadow of a doorway and he had seen her safely into her homeward-bound omnibus. The place afforded as cheap food and shelter as was to be obtained elsewhere, and was convenient enough for a mental review of the position in which he found himself. He must make enough money to marry Lena. That was the one point settled, and his features set to a strong, almost fierce, look of determination as he tackled the question of how the resolve was to be carried out.

The death of his father, little more than a month before, had thrown him on his own resources, with his solicitor's qualification as his only asset of value. He had sought counsel from his father's old friend and legal adviser, "Cast-Iron" Morton, who carried inflexibility of dealing to the point of crankiness, and had never been known to fail by a jot in his undertakings or to bate by a tittle his claims. His pronouncement on Jack's case had been terse and characteristic. "I owe something to your father. I should like the luxury of a partner with some brains. If, in the next three months, you can come to me with a thousand pounds in your hand, I can afford to take you. Otherwise you must shift for yourself." And Jack's first shift for himself had been the association with the firm of Bosford and Tunning, that had been severed so abruptly that morning.

The chess-pieces remained as Lena had set them up at tea-time. His eyes were fixed upon them absently, while his mind was busy with the question whether Morton might be induced to modify the impossible condition of the thousand pounds, when he became aware that someone had taken the vacant chair at the opposite side of his little marble-topped table. As he glanced up it caused him only a mild degree of surprise to observe, from his complexion and cast of features, that the new-comer was of Indian nationality, for chess is the most cosmopolitan of games and London not the least so of cities.

"May I request the favour of a game with you?" the Indian asked, speaking with some formality, but no markedly foreign intonation, and bowing courteously as he waved a hand to indicate the chess-board. His eyes were fixed on Jack's face with a curious intensity, and he awaited his answer with an earnestness of manner that seemed hardly natural to so slight an occasion. Chess was Jack's favourite form of recreation, and it was an advertisement outside of that intellectual game as one of the inducements to enter that had led him to become an occasional customer of the *café*. He was always ready to play, and the nationality of the stranger would add some extra interest to the encounter.

"I shall be glad to play. Shall we draw for first move?"

"Will you begin, as you have the White?" the Indian offered, politely. "Do we play for a stake?"

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"SHALL WE PLAY FOR OUR RINGS? A LESS IGNOBLE WAGER THAN FOR MONEY."

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"If you prefer to, and so long as it is only a small one."

He imagined that the Indian had most probably visited the *café* before, and would propose the stake, customary among its frequenters, of a shilling.

Instead, he drew from his finger a ring, and pointed, as he laid it on the table, to the plain signet-ring, of small value, that Jack wore on his little finger.

"Shall we play for our rings? A less ignoble wager than for money."

Jack looked in surprise at the ring and the dark-skinned stranger. He held his knuckles towards him.

"Look, the stakes are not equal. My ring is not worth thirty shillings, while yours, even if it were paste——"

The Indian drew himself up, and there was a flash of offended pride from his eyes.

"The meanest servant of the Nawab Jahandar would scorn to wear a sham, and I, Hakim Yussuf, am among his most honoured."

The hauteur of his outraged dignity looked as real as did the fiery glints from the stone of his ring, and, if shams, the one was as masterly as the other.

Jack hesitated for a few moments and then laid his own ring on the table beside the other. His mettle was roused by the challenge, and he played well enough to risk a chance encounter with a stranger.

The Indian played cautiously, defending himself with a stubborn skill that taxed all his opponent's resources of attack. Some twenty moves or so were played on each side without any tangible advantage to either. Then the Hakim misjudged a critical position, and Jack found his opportunity to carry the Black entrenchment by assault, forcing mate a few moves later with an elegant sacrifice of a rook. He disguised his triumph with a polite commonplace on the luck of the game, but the Hakim seemed not in the least chagrined by his defeat. He bowed a graceful surrender and pushed the rings across the table.

"*Wallahu d'alam!* Truly you are a great player, and Allah knows best. The loss of my ring is a small matter, but the service you were born to do me is great, and the reward I offer no mean one."

"I born to do you a service! I never met you before in my life. How can I do you any service?"

"How else than by your great skill in the greatest of games? It is written on your forehead." Again he fixed Jack's eyes with his deep, inscrutable gaze. "You will come with me to the house of my master, the Nawab Jahandar, and for this night the skill with which Allah has gifted you shall be used in his service. I swear by the Prophet there is no danger, but the rest I can better explain later."

The request was a strange one, and the whole situation entirely incomprehensible to Jack's common sense. In other circumstances the touch of the romantic in his nature might have inclined him to take the risks of the adventure, but the thought of Lena and of the interview with "Cast-Iron" Morton, which he intended for the next day, restrained him.

"I can't imagine how you think I could be of any use to you, and in any case I cannot come." His eyes sought the figure of a little man seated at the far side of the room—a Polish Jew, and a real master of the game, to whose instructions he owed his own proficiency. "If first-class chess is all you want. Levinsky over there can give me pawn and two, and I should think he would be ready to help you at a cheaper tariff than for diamond rings."

The Hakim shook his head. "Allah knows best. It is written on your forehead."

"I am sorry I am not able to oblige you," Jack answered, rather stiffly. He found it difficult to conceive how his knowledge of chess could be applied to the service of his late antagonist; and if there was not a mere pretence, hiding some darker motive. why should he refuse to enlist Levinsky? There was an uncomfortable mystery about the business, and he felt half inclined to insist on returning the ring. He said good evening. and crossed the room to where Levinsky was sitting. For a short space the Hakim stood. as though deliberating whether to offer some fresh inducement, and then went out.

"You know all about gems, Levinsky; tell me whether that is a real diamond."

The little Jew's eyes glittered almost as brightly as the facets of the stone that he held gloatingly in his fingers.

"Real? Yes, it is real. It is magnificent!" He turned it slowly to watch the sparkle of the coloured lights. "It is yours?"

"I have just won it from the Indian you saw me playing with."

Levinsky looked up with a little, cunning smile, and his fingers still played with the ring.

"You old rascal, I believe you think I stole it," Jack remarked, with a laugh. "I

was all perfectly fair. What do you suppose I ought to get if I sold it?"

"If you part with it for less than a hundred and fifty you will be swindled."

On leaving the *café*, half an hour later, Jack turned down one of the streets that lead to the Thames Embankment. It was not the shortest way to his lodgings, but the weather had cleared up and the fresh air was pleasant.

A hundred and fifty pounds! He must not count his chickens too soon, but he could find no flaw in his title to the ring that was hidden in his safest pocket, and he knew Levinsky to possess a knowledge of precious stones that made his estimate likely to be fairly accurate. True, a hundred and fifty pounds would not buy the Morton partnership, but it made a world of difference, all the same. It gave a respite from immediate necessity, before the expiry of which he might hope to find employment that would bring marriage a good deal nearer than it had seemed that morning as he slammed the door of Bosford and Tunning's office behind him. And Lena's delight when he should tell her! He was in a mood to look at the bright side of things, and he reflected that it was no small compensation for being out of a job that to-morrow he would be free to catch her on her daily walk across the Park to her morning's work——

The train of pleasant anticipations was snapped suddenly. In place of the illuminated clock-face of Westminster and the whisky advertisement on the south side of the river came a sudden darkness, a clinging compression about his head and shoulders. He tried to fling out his arms, but they were imprisoned. He tried to shout, but, though his mouth was free, his voice was stifled in narrow confinement, as though he had awakened in a coffin to find himself a victim of premature burial. But he still could breathe, and the immediate fear of death by suffocation was relieved. He felt himself lifted off his legs and laid down again on something soft. Had something fallen on him from Charing Cross Bridge? Or a gas-main exploded and deprived him of the senses of sight and hearing? Hardly, or he would have felt some pain. A sort of gurgle, something like that which precedes a voice through a telephone, sounded in one ear, and then the words, "I swear by the Prophet you are in no danger." It was the voice of the Hakim, and the same words that he had used in the *café*.

Jack made another effort to use his limbs and voice, and then lay still to await what else might be in store. Presently, from the jolt and occasional impulse of his body to one side as they took the corners, he realized that he must be in a motor-car. This phase lasted but a few minutes only, and then he felt that he was being lifted out of the car and, as he surmised, carried into some house. Then, almost as suddenly as it had been imposed, the restraint was removed from his limbs and senses. A dazzle of bright light made it difficult to take in quickly the new surroundings. He recovered his effective vision just in time to see an Indian servant leave the room and carry with him some odd-shaped article that might have been made of steel and leather, the ingenious contrivance, as he guessed, by which his recent capture had been effected.

Facing the chair in which he had been placed sat the Hakim, with unmoved countenance. Jack stared at him in bewilderment. The violence of the sensations through which he had just passed had deprived him, for the time, of his full grip on reality. Keen resentment at the outrage he had been subjected to would, he felt vaguely, have been natural to the occasion, but, in fact, a pleasant sense of physical comfort, a curiosity devoid of apprehension to learn what the next turn of events would be, were his dominant sensations. It was the Hakim who spoke first.

"I implore you to accept my most humble apologies." He accompanied the words with a bow that might have swept away a hundred insults. "If you can stifle your just resentment till you have heard my explanation, I shall offer you substantial amends."

"Your action does seem to call for some sort of justification," Jack answered, with mild irony.

"Legally it has none whatever," the Indian answered calmly. "You have a case against me for assault and false imprisonment so clear that I should not think of resisting it. So much of the law of tort I can still remember from the days when I was a student of the Inner Temple."

"Then why, in the name of all you hold sacred, have you dragged me into this Arabian Nights' adventure?"

"You name it well," the Hakim said, with a smile. "You may well feel that your experiences would have been more appropriate to the Bagdad of Haroun al-Raschid than to the present day and Park Lane. That is where you are, in the house of the Nawab Jahandar and—let me assure you again—in no kind of danger."

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He rose from his chair and, in proof that his intentions were not inhospitable, placed by Jack's side a small table holding fruit and cigarettes, as though it had been set out in expectation of a guest.

There seemed to be no better course than to accept the strange situation at its face value. Jack lighted a cigarette and the Hakim began his explanation. "I, Hakim Yussuf, owe my position of physician and secret counsellor to the Nawab to what poor skill I possess in the game of chess—and now the same cause threatens my destruction."

"*Your* destruction? I should have rather thought it threatened mine," Jack exclaimed, remembering that it was his favourite hobby that had led him into his present position.

The Hakim again reassured him, and continued: "The Nawab is devoted to the game with a passion that perhaps you cannot understand—that perhaps only the fiery sun of our Indian climate could engender. And the Khan of Zamin—my master's great rival in politics, as his ancestors were in war—is as mad, if you call it so, in the same way. To either a triumph on the board is as glorious as a victory in battle, and the stakes they play for are sometimes as great. To-night the deciding game is to be finished in a contest between the two Courts for the surrender of a coveted bit of territory on their side against a Royal palace on ours. No mean stakes, you will concede. And, further, my own position—perhaps my life—hangs on the issue."

"Your life? On the win or loss of a mere game of chess!"

"It sounds fantastic," the Hakim admitted, "but 'East is East and West is West,' as your Kipling says. What may seem incredible in Park Lane may be commonplace in the realm of the Nawab Jahandar. It is a condition of the match that members of the household on either side may consult as to the moves that should be played. Yesterday, at one point in the game that remains unfinished, the Nawab said, 'We will take their knight.' But I said, 'May I be your ransom! If we take their knight they will defeat us, but if we take the pawn there is a sure road to victory.' The Nawab insisted that his move was the right one, and I, for the sake of the great stakes, was obstinate to take the pawn, till at last he flushed with anger and said, 'Be it so, then. You shall finish the game without my help—to your reward and honour if you win, to your disgrace if you lose.' And thus it is that I am threatened with destruction, for I had overlooked a manœuvre of the other side. I can find no answer to what I foresee will be their next move. Unless you can, it may well be that my days in the sun are numbered."

"But how," Jack asked, "did you come to pitch upon me as the one to help you? There may be a hundred better players in London, and one of them, Levinsky, I pointed out to you in the *café*."

Hakim Yussuf paused for a moment, embarrassed to confess to what the Englishman might think a foolishness.

"It was thus, though to your Western mind it may seem idle superstition. This evening I thought I would revisit the Inner Temple, where, as I have told you, I once was a law student. As I passed along the Strand, wondering how, if Allah willed, my fate might be averted, the word 'Chess' stood suddenly before my eyes. I entered, feeling that I was guided from above. I found you sitting there. In front of you was an empty chair and the pieces set up in readiness, as though you expected me. *Wallahu d'alam.* It was surely the guiding of Allah."

"You would have done better to get Levinsky," Jack answered, with a touch of scepticism. He smiled as he remembered that it was Lena who had set up the pieces. It added a whimsical touch to events that his lover's hand should have fired such a train of adventure. Yet, after all, the Indian might be right. Jack was not so materially-minded as to doubt that the ways of Providence—or Allah—were strange, or that they might be working for his own as well as the other's good.

"Your method of seeking my help was, to put it gently, unconventional. But, since you think I can give it, I am willing to try."

"Then I hereby appoint you, as is within my authority, a member for the time being of the Nawab's household."

As he spoke he held in his hand a seal with an inscription engraved in Arabic characters on the stone.

"Here is your firman, your badge of office. You need only show it if your presence should be questioned, and afterwards, if you care to, you may keep it as a memento." He presented the seal to Jack. "Your salary for the one night of your employment will be five hundred guineas, as much, I should think, as you would get from a jury if you took proceedings. You will decide the moves that we shall play, and if you win the amount shall be doubled."

"And if I lose?"

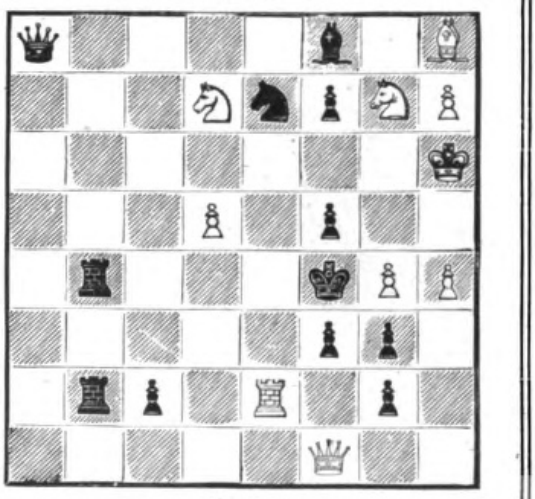
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"If you lose you take five hundred and we cry quits. But—for me—I must bow to the will of Allah."

Before a low table, inlaid with exquisite workmanship in squares of gold and ebony, Jack Burnside sat striving to keep his mind concentrated on the ivory pieces. At his shoulder was Hakim Yussuf, and to one side, on a seat raised on a sort of dais to command a better view of the board, the Nawab Jahandar sat grimly watching the progress of the struggle, but offering no comment or suggestion on the play. That was the Hakim's responsibility. He sat there as impassive and motionless as an image of Fate, awaiting the issue.

At a similar table at the other end of the long room sat another group—the camp of the Khan of Zamin—and at long intervals, for the play was slow, an attendant marched solemnly from one board to repeat on the other each move as it was played.

In forces on the board the Nawab, for whose side Jack played the Black, had some advantage—a rook against a knight on the balance and two extra pawns. But the position was intricate, and the Black king was threatened with an attack that appeared irresistible—as the following diagram will




Black to play and win.

show. It was a case where desperate risks must be ventured. Jack played his queen to a square where it could be captured for nothing—a Greek gift, for, if taken, he could give mate in two. It was too much to expect that the other side should fall into the shallow trap, but there was nothing better and a move had to be played. The Khan and his advisers took a long time to consider their reply, and when at last the attendant approached to register their answer on Jack's board his pulses beat quicker in the suspense of the moment. The dark fingers hovered for an instant or two over the pieces, and then Jack found that the fatal gift was rejected. The White queen was moved to a square where she threatened mate on the next move. Jack leant forward once more to the board, and for half an hour, it might have been, strained every faculty of his mind to find an answer. A check seemed the only way to avert the impending disaster, and even that, so far as he could see, would only delay the inevitable end. In desperation he gave the check. It involved an offer of a rook, but again the Khan refused. The White king was moved to a place of safety, to a square where he could only be checked by the sacrifice of a rook for nothing. The checks must be kept up. Jack accepted the inexorable logic of the case. His second rook followed the first to destruction.

He leant back in his chair, when he had played the move, for a brief rest from the strain of calculation. To his hard-wrought brain there came a curious sense of unreality in his surroundings. Those Indians over there, their dark faces fixed solemnly on the little ivory figures of the chess-men, were they real? That idol-like figure of a grim Nawab, was he really part of a sane, substantial world? Or were they all parts merely of some dreamlike delusion? Was he, Jack Burnside, solicitor in search of a job, really playing chess for an Indian palace and a man's life?

The attendant approached and removed a rook from the board. The sense of unreality was brushed away. Fantastic as the situation was, it was real enough, and his personal stake in the matter the Morton partnership and Lena's happiness.

Spurred by the thought, he bent his mind to a final, straining effort. His brain responded. It seemed gifted with a flashing, unwonted clearness. Through a long series of checks his mental vision followed the movements of the pieces, till his pulses throbbed and fluttered at a sudden glimpse of victory. He could force a brilliant mate!

Twice again he ran through the series of moves to make quite certain before, with a trembling hand, he dared to play the queen.

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"HE WAS GLARING AT THE BOARD WITH A

"*Kaza wa Kadar!*" The last move had startled the Nawab from his assumed composure. He was glaring at the board with a light of malignant ferocity in his dark eyes.

"What does he say?" Jack asked the Hakim.

"'Fate and destiny are against him.' He thinks we are surely mad to throw away our queen."

"Tell him that in seven more moves we shall mate them."

"Is it truly so?" the Hakim asked, and Jack nodded.

"*Wallahu d'alam!* It was surely the guiding of Allah!"

The remaining moves on the part of White were practically forced, and the game went more quickly. Jack's eyes followed the attendant as he crossed the room to communicate a move to the other side. He had exchanged a pawn that had reached the eighth square for a knight and not a queen. He could see from their startled gestures and flurried consultations that the reply had taken them by surprise, and, presently, that they realized its fatal import in the game. The attendant did not return. Instead the Khan of Zamin himself rose from his seat and, with the dignity of a conquered monarch, advanced to present to the Nawab Jahandar the White king in token of surrender.

Lena entered the Park at the Marble Arch, and a little farther on her face lighted up with a gleam of happy recognition, as she caught sight of Jack Burnside coming towards her. "Why, Jack! How perfectly lovely! I never thought of meeting you. But what have you been doing? You look as though you had been up all night, and, my *dear* boy, what *have* you done to your hat?"

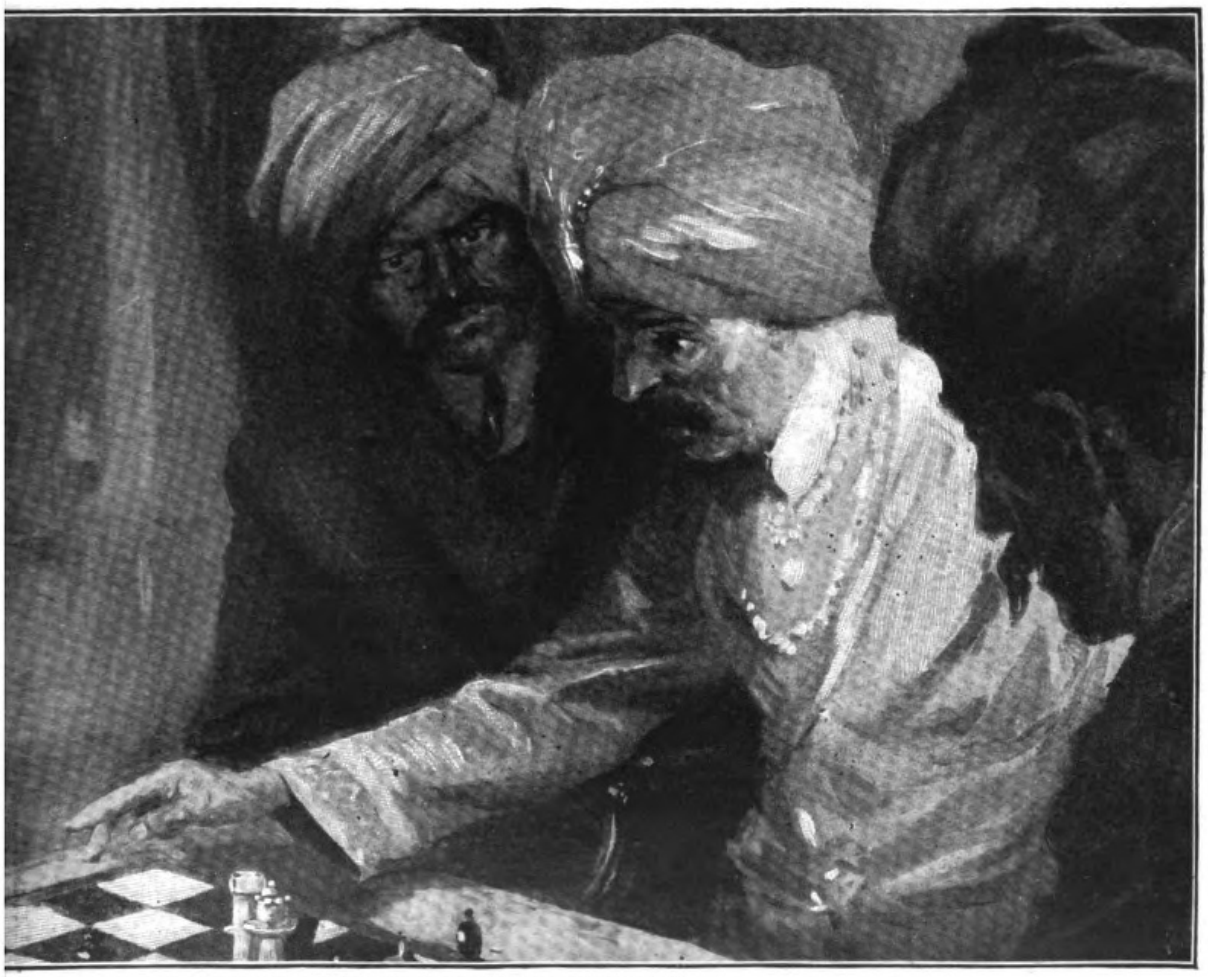
"You've guessed it in one. I *have* been up all night. No, you needn't look dismayed. Everything is all right. A thousand times more than all right, Lena darling. But you *have* given me a time!"

"*I* have?"

"Yes, you. Wasn't it your hand that set up the pieces on the board?"

She looked puzzled, but she could see from

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LIGHT OF MALIGNANT FEROCITY IN HIS DARK EYES."

his face that the mystification was a pleasant one. "Tell me at once what you have been doing. Tell me where you have been and where you are going. Tell me in three words, or we part for ever."

"I have been breakfasting with the Nawab Jahandar and the Khan of Zamin, and I am on my way to the City to arrange a deed of partnership with a man called Morton. But I see you don't believe the first word of my story, so I sha'n't tell you the rest."

"If you can't help being a tantalizing, teasing pig, I suppose you can't. I wish you a very good morning, Mr. Burnside."

She turned away with a mock air of displeasure and walked to the nearest chair under the trees. He drew another chair up beside hers and sat down. "If you can't help being a dear, snappy, beautiful pig, I suppose you can't. But look at this." He put an envelope into her hand and watched her expression of wonder as she examined the contents. "One thousand and fifty pounds in genuine Bank of England notes, my golden goose! And a diamond ring and—wait a moment—you must look at this before I begin." He gave her the seal that had been presented to him by Hakim Yussuf.

"What are the words, Jack? What do they mean? What does the whole affair mean?"

"The words are '*Wallahu d'alam.*' They mean 'Allah knows best.' I rather think that is the meaning of the whole affair as well."

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# MULTUM IN PARVO.

## A COMPENDIUM OF SHORT ARTICLES.

# The Most Extraordinary Method of Fishing in the World.

By COMMANDER BROOKER, R.N.



1.—The short piece of line with which the fish are caught.

NOT many vessels visit the little coral island, in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, which is called Penrhyn Island. It is a very pretty little island, with a large lagoon in the centre, entrance to the lagoon being obtained from the sea by a narrow channel through the coral reefs. But Penrhyn Island is chiefly interesting because of the novel method of catching fish which is sometimes used by the natives, and which is peculiar to this island alone amongst all the others.

Owing to the clearness of the water, the bottom of the ocean and the fish swimming about at various depths are plainly visible from the surface, the depth of water being about twelve fathoms—seventy-two feet. It was owing to this clearness of the water that it was possible to obtain the photographs that are shown with this article.

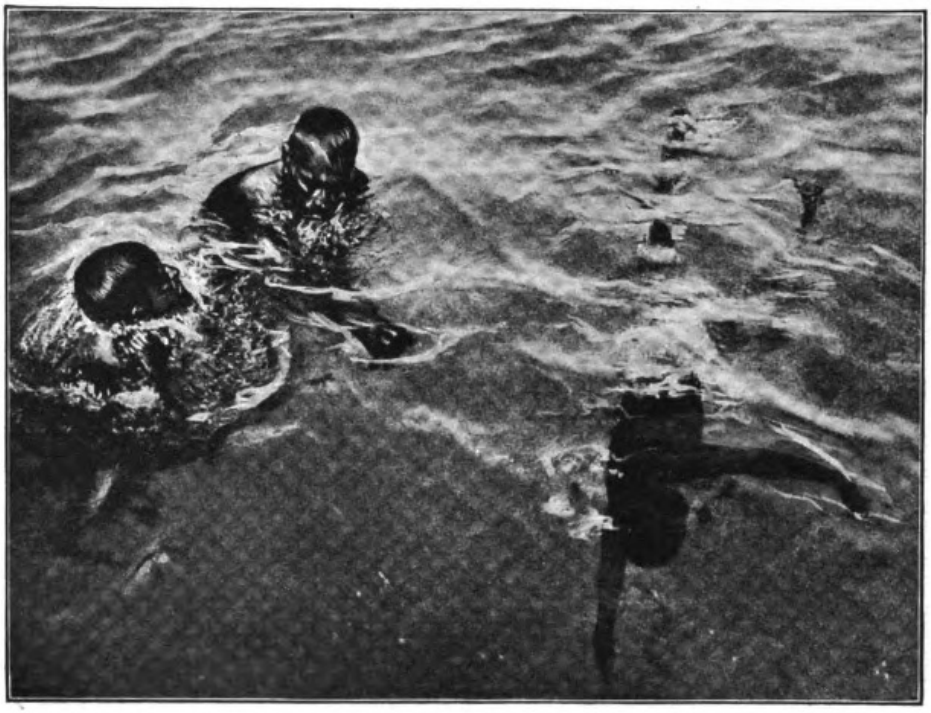
The first of the fishing pictures shows three natives preparing to descend. They have each a short piece of line about two feet long. One end they hold in their hands, while the other end is fitted with a hook and baited with a piece of fish. In their mouths they carry a reserve of bait. In the photograph the line is being held up clear of the water, so that it will show in the picture (1).

The men swim down, towing the line by the hand. The next picture (2) shows them descending. When



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2.—The men diving with the line in hand.



3.—Coming to the surface after a catch.

at a depth of about twenty feet they remain still, and the fish can be seen swimming up to them and taking the bait. One man who was the most expert was able, while still under water, to remove the first fish caught from the hook, rebait the hook, and catch a second fish before returning to the surface, the first fish being held by its back between his teeth. In the next picture (3) are shown the men swimming up to the surface, one man's head just above water, another's just below the surface, and the third man swimming down to catch another fish.

The last picture (4) shows a man holding up the fish that he has just caught. On the occasion when these photographs were taken, in half an hour the three men caught about thirty fish between them, each weighing a little over one pound. There is only one sort of fish that will take the hook in this manner, and luckily they are the best eating fish in these waters.

There is considerable risk to the swimmers while this form of fishing is being carried on, because of the numerous sharks, which, although not very large, attack a man under water if they can get at him. The sharks are between four and five feet long, so that a constant look-out for them has to be kept by the men while under water. The fishing on this occasion came to a sudden end owing to a shark being seen swimming towards the spot. It was seen by those on board the ship about a hundred yards away, and almost at the same instant by the men who happened to be beneath the surface at the time. All the fishermen came out of the water, and said it would not be safe to go down again that day. These sharks are not large enough to bite a limb clean off, but they sometimes cause death by bleeding, or by mortification of the wound setting up. Not long ago a man was bitten in the shoulder by a small shark, and owing to the shape and position of the shark's teeth in its jaws the man could not free himself. He swam ashore with the shark still holding on to his shoulder, but he prevented the shark from moving by holding its tail tightly round his neck. The one white man on the island was able to disinfect the wound, and after a long time the place healed up. But it is seldom possible to save a man's life after a shark-bite.



4.—A good haul.

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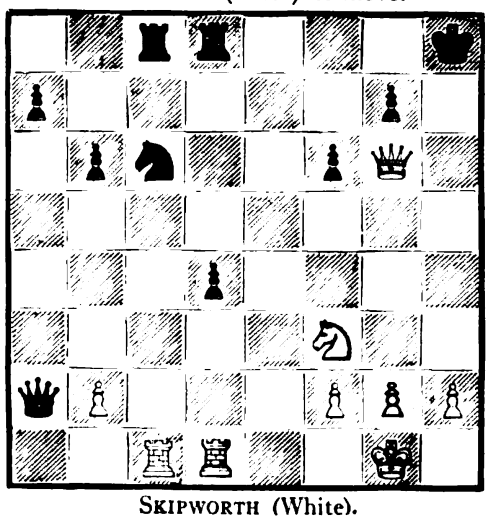
# Some Historic Chess Blunders.

By W. H. WATTS.

IT is a comforting fact to the ordinary amateur, the man who enters his club championship and plays in club matches, that even the great masters make the most glaring and unaccountable blunders at times, mistakes which turn won games into draws or losses, and often mean a heavy monetary loss. Naturally every game won means a mistake committed by the loser, but we are speaking now not of the gradual decline into a lost game brought about by the steady, forceful tactics of an opponent, nor of faulty combinations resulting in loss, but rather of sound and winning combinations suddenly ruined by an obviously incorrect move or inexplicable failure to take advantage of opportunities presented by an opponent's weak play.

A remarkable blunder which was not known to either of the players, and was not even discovered until long after the close of the tournament, occurred in the 1883 London Masters' Tournament in the very first round. In the game, Skipworth *v.* Zukertort, the following position arose :—

ZUKERTORT (Black) to move.



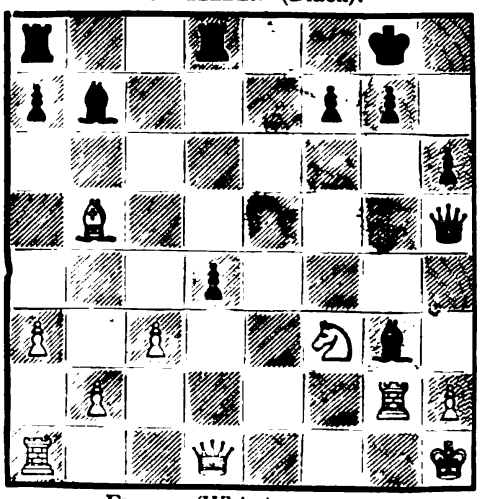
SKIPWORTH (White).

Here Zukertort, as Black, moved Q to K 3, a blunder no third-class player would make, but still more amazing is the fact that his opponent Skipworth moved in reply R to R sq, and subsequently lost. Had he replied with Kt to Kt 5, a move that the merest tyro would see, he would have mated his famous antagonist, or won his queen and the game.

Perhaps the most astounding thing about this double oversight is the fact that neither of the players noticed it, it was also overlooked by all the annotators, and, moreover, it was not even noticed in compiling the official book of the tournament in which the game is given, with copious notes by the great Zukertort himself. It was simultaneously discovered some months after by a correspondent of the *Croydon Guardian*, the chess editor of which was Mr. Leonard P. Rees, the secretary of the British Chess Federation, and a member of the North London Chess Club.

Another and very similar oversight occurred in the same tournament, but in the minor or Vizayanagaram section, in the game between Bardeleben and Fisher, who were respectively first and second prizewinners. The position was :—

BARDELEBEN (Black).

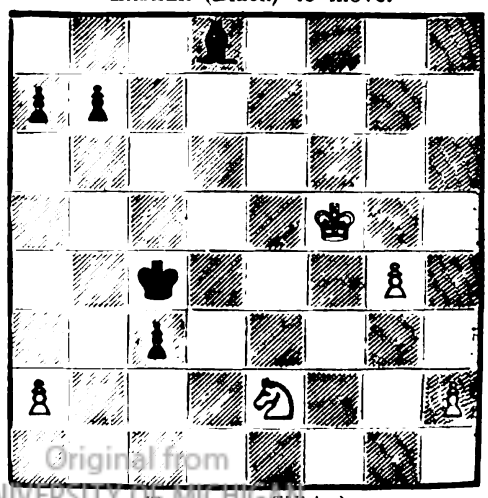


FISHER (White) to move.

Here White, whose game is undoubtedly lost, played Kt takes P, and Black replied with B takes R, ch., and eventually won, but instead he could have played Q takes R P, mate. Perhaps in his feeling of confidence at having a won game Black could be excused for overlooking mate on the move, but obviously both players did so, and again, not only the players, but also the Press, for no comment was made in publishing the game, and although the game appears in Mr. Minchin's book of the tournament mentioned above, no comment is made therein, notwithstanding an elaborate analysis at this very move of Kt takes P. This oversight was actually discovered long after the publication of the tournament book by Mr. Marks, a former secretary of the Athenæum Chess Club.

In the Hastings tournament Lasker arrived at the following very interesting end-game position against Dr. Tarrasch :—

LASKER (Black) to move.



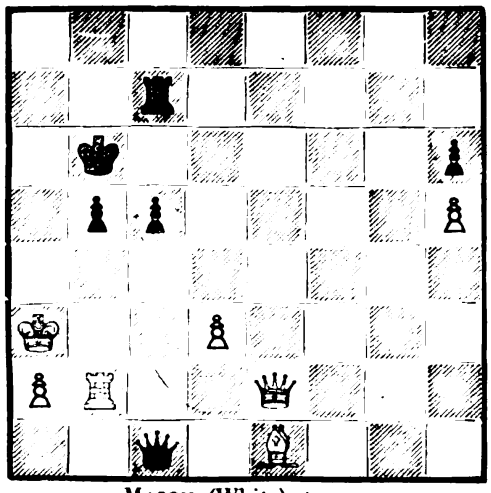
TARRASCH (White).

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Almost every player with any pretensions to skill would proceed P to B 7 for Black, and this is the correct move, and one that wins very quickly. Not so Lasker. Under some misapprehension, he played K to Q 6, whereupon Tarrasch played Kt takes P, and, playing the ending in irreproachable style, won. This defeat was towards the close of the tournament, and a win would have enabled Lasker to tie with Pillsbury for first and second prizes, instead of taking third place, Tarrasch would have tied for the fourth and fifth with Steinitz, whilst Tchigorin, who finished second, would have had to be content with third. Thus it will be seen that in a tournament other competitors besides the two actually concerned benefit and suffer respectively by these oversights, and as they benefit or suffer so does their monetary reward vary, through circumstances quite outside their control.

London tournaments seem to provide these blunders plentifully, and in favour of the first prizewinners, too, although this seems to apply to most of our examples. In the London tournament of 1890, Mason playing *v.* Lasker arrived at the following position :—

LASKER (Black).

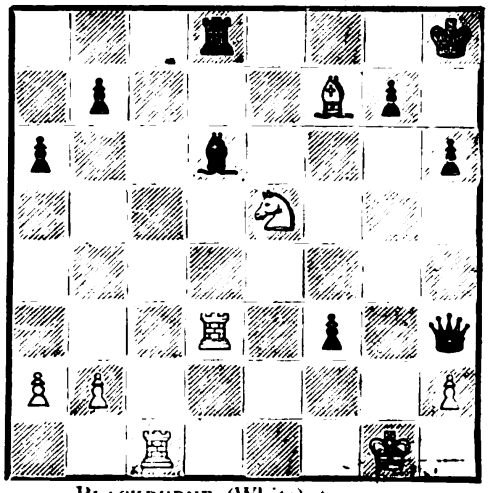


MASON (White) to move.

Instead of playing B to Q 2, or Q to K 6, ch., Mason moved B to B 2, and was immediately mated by Q to B 6, ch., and R to R 2, mate. The game had been a long struggle, in which the world's champion had been outplayed, and just as Mason should have secured his well-earned point this unfortunate howler occurs. Ten or twelve hours' hard work thrown away in one short second! The disheartening effect of such a blunder may spoil a man's play for a whole tournament. Quite apart from its demoralizing effect, the loss of this single point gave Mason ninth place instead of eighth, and we may easily allow that the confidence engendered by a victory over Lasker in the early part of a tournament would have placed Mason much higher in the final score. Such a mistake is totally different from adopting the wrong continuation in a complicated mid-game position, over-estimating an attack, or even overlooking a possible forceful rejoinder a few moves ahead. An ordinary "skittler" would see the correct move at a glance, and yet the master not only misses the correct move, but makes one that subjects him to the simplest of mates in two.

The mistake which cost Blackburne the first prize in the Vienna tournament of 1873 is a very bad one, but an exceptionally good example for this article. The game was a fine one, and in the position shown Black (Rosenthal) had just moved P to B 6 :—

ROSENTHAL (Black).

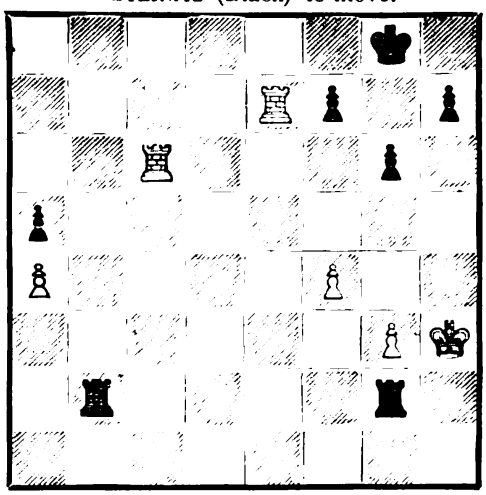


BLACKBURNE (White) to move.

The reply of R takes P wins at least another piece for White. The position is worthy of study, as it must be remembered that White had embarked on a sacrificial variation, which brought about the position on the diagram. The safety of his queen is Black's chief difficulty, and to save it he must give up at least another piece. Instead of R takes P, however, White played Kt takes P, whereupon B takes P, ch., wins at once for Black. By thus losing, Blackburne tied with Steinitz instead of winning the tournament outright.

In fairness to Steinitz, though, attention should be called to his blunder against Zukertort in the Vienna tournament of 1882. In the first round Steinitz had lost what is even to-day a very famous game to his great rival, and in the second round he made a great effort to turn the tables, and cleverly got his opponent into a mating net, and then allowed him to escape, the game being eventually drawn. This half point, as events turned out, was sufficient to have placed Steinitz first, avoiding the tie with Winawer. The position is intensely interesting, and is as follows :—

STEINITZ (Black) to move.



ZUKERTORT (White).

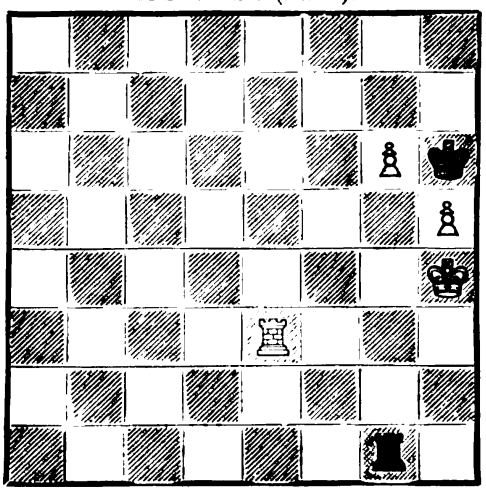
Here Steinitz made the novice's move of R to R 7, ch., whereas P to K R 4 wins right away; the only variation we need show being 1. . . . . P to R 4; 2. K

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to R 4, R to Kt 6; 3. K to Kt 5, K to Kt 2; 4. R takes Kt P, ch., K to B 1, and wins. Other variations will readily occur to those who examine the ending and will be found most interesting, but all lead to the one result.

No article dealing with chess history is complete without some illustration from the De la Bourdonnais and M'Donnell match. In one of these games M'Donnell, with a lone rook against a rook and two pawns, might have secured a clever but not unusual draw. The fact that he had two chances of getting the draw in successive moves would show that the possibility never occurred to him. We give the position :—

M'DONNELL (Black).



DE LA BOURDONNAIS (White).

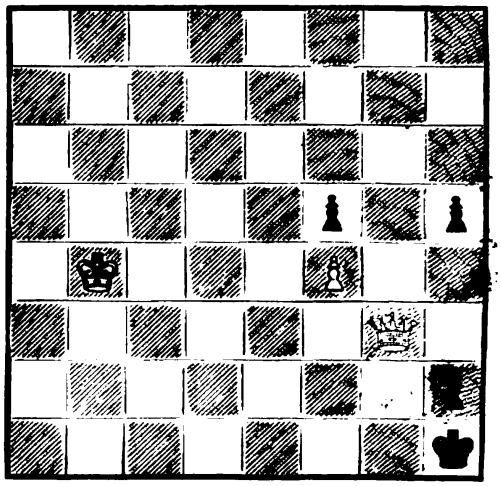
The game actually proceeded :—

1. R to K 7 (?), R to K R 8, ch. ; 2. K to Kt 4, R to Kt 8, ch. ; 3. K to B 5, and wins easily. But 1. . . . . R to Kt 5, ch., draws at once if the rook be taken, and should White attempt to avoid this result by 2. K to R 3, R to R 5, ch. ; 3. K to Kt 3, R takes P, and the draw cannot be avoided.

Even as played, Black had a second chance of drawing by 2. . . . . R to R 5, ch.; 3. K moves, R takes P, but the brilliant Irishman did not see it ; his chance was gone, and De la Bourdonnais won in a very few moves. This was game No. 9 in their fifth match, or No. 73 in the complete series.

We will conclude our examples with one of quite another kind. In the sixth game of the match Morphy (White) *v.* Harrwitz (Black), the following position occurred :—

HARRWITZ (Black).



MORPHY (White) to move.

It is White to move, and in a note at this point Staunton in his "Praxis" suggests as follows : 1. K to B 4, P to R 5 ; 2. Q takes P (R 5), K to Kt 8; 3. K to Q 5, P to R 8 (becoming a queen) ; 4. Q takes Q, ch., K takes Q ; 5. K to K 5, and wins. Very elaborate, and one can imagine the careful man assuring himself of the soundness of his analysis and the certainty of his win, owing to the remoteness of Black's king, but any ordinary player would prefer 1. Q to B 2, P to R 5 (the only move) ; 2. Q to B sq., mate, and the position is such that it does not admit of any variations.

This article does not pretend to be a catalogue of such blunders ; only a few specimens have been selected. No doubt scores of others, equally glaring and equally far-reaching in their effects upon the player's final scores, are available. But even the few we give in full may serve to put hope into the heart of the amateur, and they certainly afford the opportunity to renew acquaintance with games and positions of great interest.

# Accusing Hair.

WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY JAMES SCOTT.

A FEW strands of human hair may at times have a very powerful influence in deciding a criminal trial. Placed safely in a glass receptacle, these hairs have been carefully studied by experts, and made to throw what is often a new light on some puzzling case. But is it not possible, it may be asked, for such apparently insignificant trifles to mislead ? Can it be said positively whether certain hairs belonged to a man or a woman ? These and other questions will be irrefutably answered. With the idea of showing the comparative ease with which these things yield their secrets to the experienced scientist, I have prepared these direct observations on the subject.

Although the fact might hardly be suspected, there are clear and well-defined distinctions between the chief hairs of men and women. Apart from their individual lengths, which provide a rather unreliable clue to their respective origins, they possess structural features of a very conspicuous character. Before I further refer to them it may be advisable to briefly state how a hair grows.

Each hair commences its life in a minute pit, or follicle, of the skin, and has a tip that is gradually pushed upwards by the development of tiny cells in the bulb or root. Oil glands at the side of the latter supply the hair with grease, so that when one is pulled

out it appears as a ball of fatty substance. However long a hair may be, its free, or most distant, end is the oldest, because it is in and around the neck of the bulb that new cells are added, and therefore push out the already finished length.

Hairs are solid, and not tubular, consisting of a core —which is often darker than the remainder—and an outer adherent shell whose surface is densely clothed with flat, thin cells, or scales, lying over one another

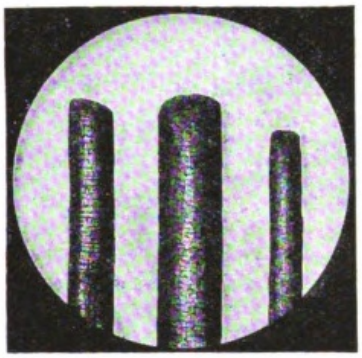


Fig. 1.—The extremities of three hairs of a man's head.



Fig. 2. — The extremities of four hairs of a woman's head.

in an upward direction. The formation, seen plainer in a grey hair, is not unlike that of the skin of a snake's body, except that the scales are more irregular in shape.

The edges of these depressed scales, when seen in profile along the "sides" of the hair, present a saw-toothed appearance if sufficient magnification is used.

Colours are due to amalgamated yet separate atoms of pigment deposited in the cells just beneath the surface of the hair. In bleaching, the chemical would pass underneath the scales and react upon these specks of natural paint.

We may look as closely as possible with the naked eye at the hairs of a man and woman side by side, but it is quite impossible to notice any difference between their points; yet the microscope will readily distinguish the difference.

If we forcibly remove a hair from the head of a man and magnify it, we find that the outer extremity is blunt, while the general formation is smooth and clear

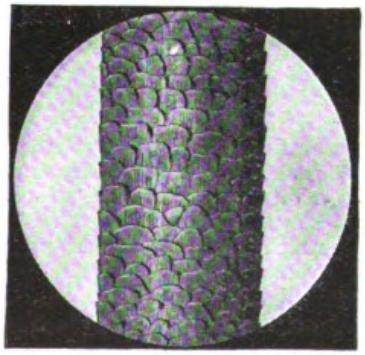


Fig. 3.—A portion of an enormously-magnified grey hair — The scales are loose, and wear off.

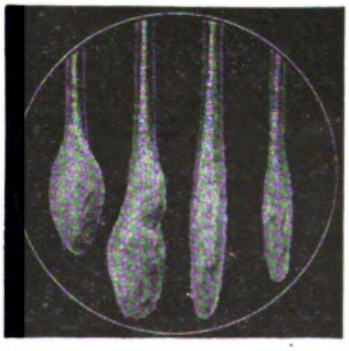


Fig. 4.—Bulbs of the hair of a man and a woman — the woman's being the longer.

of exterior particles except dust. Upon similarly magnifying the hair of a woman we learn that it tapers gradually to a point, which is usually split up in a brush-like style. From the outside there also project, at various spots, transparent prickles, due no doubt to the luxuriance occasioned by non-interference with the growth. What greater contrast could be

expected than these two sets of characters, which are shown below?

With regard to the first case—that of a man's hair —the blunt apex in each example, to be seen in Fig. 1, is due to its having been cut by the barber. No doubt the absence of prickles along its sides is occasioned by the continual effort made by the hair to renew the lost portions, so that no material can be spared for side issues. A woman, as a rule, does not destroy any part of the hair, and the consequence is that the reserve store, or surplus, nutriment breaks its bonds, as in No. 2, now and again to supply accessory details. Of course, women cut their hair occasionally, but not in so complete a manner as is carried out by a barber. However, hairs having points of the kind depicted in Fig. 2 are indisputably those belonging to a female.

The hairs reproduced here were average actual specimens, and will explain how scientists can determine, with tolerable exactitude, whether any particular hair belonged to a man or a woman.

The hairs of a beard may seem to approach in character those from a woman's head; but their points have sufficient distinctions of their own, even when not habitually cut and trimmed, so that there is not much chance of their being confused with others. Besides, one has only to bear in mind that the hairs of a beard are generally coarse, wavy, and stiff, while those of a woman are soft, flexible, and elastic.

I think that it is possible to say with certainty whether a hair has been artificially bleached or has turned naturally grey. The scales vary somewhat in shape, according to their positions on the hair, being larger near the base and smaller and finer towards the tip. Grey hairs have a tendency to produce large scales as depicted in Fig. 3, and have fewer or no prickles along their "sides." This phase is, however,



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debatable. Artificially bleached hair may be expected to be fuller of microscopic air or gas bubbles.

Sheep's wool is merely modified hair, and *colourless*. It is a noticeable feature that its scales are very large and prominent, not unlike those of grey hair.

Another aspect of the subject serves as a valuable auxiliary means of identification. I refer to the so-called roots, or greasy knobs, which are extracted when a hair is indiscriminately pulled away from its attachment. The real roots are the blood capillaries ramifying through the papillæ, or cushions, over each of which a hair bulb fits, the bulb being hollowed out at the bottom like the lower half of a wine-bottle. Although this detail may not be quite so secure, to judge from, as those already dealt with, it nevertheless has an important bearing on the disclosures. A pair of little glands, situated against the bulb, secrete their oil around it, so that when a hair is dragged out the swollen end removed from the skin is white and greasy. If placed in a solution of caustic soda, this fat will be quickly cleaned away and exhibit the pointed real base of the hair. All cells are, however, at this part so graduated from one to another kind that there is no strict line of demarcation between them.

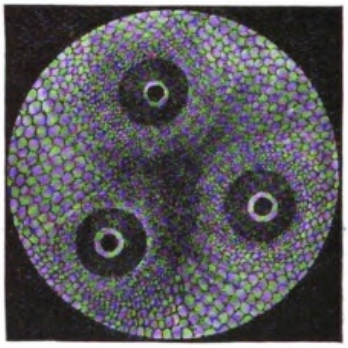


Fig. 5.—A portion of a shaved chin. The light rings denote the outside of the hair, while the dark ones are the cells which enclose the bulbs shown in Fig. 4.

Broadly speaking, the bulbs of a woman's hair are longer and more slender than those of a man's hair. In practice some very dilute solution of caustic soda helps to reveal these facts, which are delineated in Fig. 4.

The appearance of the connective tissue or flesh next the skin in which the bases of hairs are partly embedded is depicted herewith. The cellular formation is quite distinct, and will help to prove how fairly easy it is for a competent microscopist to describe the nature of such matter, which is depicted in Fig. 5.

It is even possible for an expert to tell the condition of health—and disease — both past and present, from an examination of hair, because in certain weaknesses it partly ceases to grow — against the skin, of course — and then, when improvement of the system sets in, it becomes vigorous again. The result will be the formation of a "waist," or constriction at the part where it temporarily stopped growth, and it is the distance of this from the scalp which enables the expert to calculate when an illness occurred.

# A New Kind of Anagram.

By EDWARD DALE.

I VENTURE to submit the enclosed, which I think would form a pleasing variation on the anagram letters already published in THE STRAND. In this case certain words which form other words when transposed are indicated by numbers, the numbers which represent the various pairs of words being identical. To make this clearer I give an example :—

"In a fit of 1 I raised my 2 and 3 at my 3 at close 1, but luckily rage 2 my aim."

The solution of which is :—

"In a fit of *anger* I raised my *pistol* and *shot* at my *host* at close *range*, but luckily rage *spoilt* my aim."

In my letter I have given plenty of help to the solver by the context, and most of the words should be found readily enough. Perhaps a few, such as No. 17, will prove teasers.

---

1 View,
Seaborough.

DEAR 2,—You will see by this letter that I am at the 3. I have not been well, and, although the doctor says there is no 3, he advised me to 4 my duties for a time and try a 2 of the briny, instead of 5 myself with medicine.

I am fast recovering from my 6 indisposition, and write to tell you about the place and my 5 here. The 7 is very pleasant, 7 I am thankful, and yesterday I walked some 8 to Seaton ; but, instead of going by the 9 road, I turned off just past the first 10, round by a 10 quarry, where there is a 11 which 12 its way through a valley. A gentle 13 took me to the 6 of a wood, where the air was 13 with violets. I could not 14 trying to gather some, and in this I succeeded, but at the expense of 15 my blouse just 16 the 16. I had to climb a very steep cliff to get into the road again, and, as I am not much of a 17, this tired me terribly. Coming back I kept to the high road, which felt as hard as 15, and my feet were so sore that I 18 as I reached home.

At the boarding-house where I am staying the people are not 19 of refinement, but I 19 met a jollier lot. We have concerts most nights, and it is surprising what a lot of 20 is 20 among us until someone draws it out. There is a rather pretty girl with a 18 who is a 4 of more than average ability. One gentleman sings 21 songs, and I will give him 9 for singing them well ; but he is a most singular-looking man, and reminds me of the Mad 22 in the "23" book. He endeavoured to 24 himself to me the 25 I arrived, and offered to 21 me to the 26 Café and get me an ice. I thought him a bit of a 27, and made a somewhat rude 27, and I suppose he 28 of his forwardness, for he has been very polite since. He 29 me against one of the men here, who is an awful bore. This 30 is a man of some 29, and thinks himself a 11 of 31, but in my opinion he is merely a 31 of witticisms he has heard. At dinner as a 32 25 he tries to 32 my mind, and 33 upon some subject of which I suspect he has previously looked up the 33, while I let him 30 on and try my 12 not to 8.

Well, dear, I have no time for the 17 of all the adventures I have had, or the 26 of any more of my experiences at 28. Time is proverbially a 34, and I must get this letter 34 at once. Things are rather expensive here ; I have not 35 myself so far, but I must make a 24 in my expenses, for I have to see the 35 on my return, and that is likely to run me in for several guineas. Hoping you are well, I 1

Your affectionate 14,
23.

P.S.—36 do not let many days 36 before you reply, or I shall not write again. That is a terrible 22, isn't it ?

*[Solution will be given next month.]*

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# PAYING OFF



BY

## W·W·JACOBS

### Illustrated by Will Owen.

MY biggest fault, said the night-watchman, gloomily, has been good-nature. I've spent the best part of my life trying to do my fellow-creeturs a good turn. And what do I get for it? If all the people I've helped was to come 'ere now there wouldn't be standing room for them on this wharf. 'Arf of them would be pushed overboard—and a good place for 'em, too.

I've been like it all my life. I was good-natured enough to go to sea as a boy because a skipper took a fancy to me and wanted my 'elp, and when I got older I was good-natured enough to get married. All my life I've given 'elp and advice free, and only a day or two ago one of 'em wot I 'ad given it to came round here with her 'usband and 'er two brothers and 'er mother and two or three people from the same street, to see her give me " wot for."

Another fault o' mine has been being sharp. Most people make mistakes, and they can't bear to see anybody as don't. Over and over agin I have showed people 'ow silly they 'ave been to do certain things, and told 'em wot I should ha' done in their places, but I can't remember one that ever gave me a " thank you " for it.

There was a man 'ere 'arf an hour ago that reminded me of both of these faults. He came in *a-purpose* to remind me, and 'e brought a couple o' grinning, brass-faced monkeys with 'im to see 'im do it. I was sitting on that barrel when he came, and arter two minutes I felt as if I was sitting on red-'ot cinders. He purtended he 'ad come in for the sake of old times and to ask arter my 'ealth, and all the time he was doing 'is best to upset me to amuse them two poor objects 'e 'ad brought with 'im.

Capt'in Mellun is his name, and 'e was always a foolish, soft-'eaded sort o' man, and how he 'as kept 'is job I can't think. He used to trade between this wharf and Bristol on a little schooner called the *Firefly*, and seeing wot a silly, foolish kind o' man he was, I took a little bit o' notice of 'im. Many and many a time when 'e was going to do something he'd ha' been sorry for arterwards I 'ave

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taken 'im round to the Bull's Head and stood 'im pint arter pint until he began to see reason and own up that I was in the right.

His crew was a'most as bad as wot he was, and all in one month one o' the 'ands gave a man ten shillings for a di'mond ring he saw 'im pick up, wot turned out to be worth fourpence, and another one gave five bob for a meerschaum pipe made o' chalk. When I pointed out to 'em wot fools they was they didn't like it, and a week arterwards, when the skipper gave a man in a pub 'is watch and chain and two pounds to hold, to show 'is confidence in 'im, and I told 'im exactly wot I thought of him, 'e didn't like it.

"You're too sharp, Bill," he says, sneering like. "*My* opinion is that the pore man was run over. He told me 'e should only be away five minutes. And he 'ad got an honest face: nice open blue eyes, and a smile that done you good to look at."

"You've been swindled," I ses, "and you know it. If I'd been done like that I should never hold up my 'ead agin. Why, a child o' five would know better. You and your crew all seem to be tarred with the same brush. You ain't fit to be trusted out alone."

I believe 'e told his 'ands wot I said; anyway, two bits o' coke missed me by 'arf an inch next evening, and for some weeks not one of 'em spoke a word to me. When they see me coming they just used to stand up straight and twist their nose.

It didn't 'urt me, o' course. I took no notice of 'em. Even when one of 'em fell over the broom I was sweeping with I took no notice of 'im. I just went on with my work as if 'e wasn't there.

I suppose they 'ad been in the sulks about a month, and I was sitting 'ere one evening getting my breath arter a couple o' hours' 'ard work, when one of 'em, George Tebb by name, came off the ship and nodded to me as he passed.

"Evening, Bill," he ses.

"Evening," I ses, rather stiff.

"I wanted a word with you, Bill," he ses, in a low voice. "In fact, I might go so far as to say I want to ask you to do me a favour."

I looked at him so 'ard that he coughed and looked away.

"We might talk about it over a 'arf-pint," he ses.

"No, thank you," I ses. "I 'ad a 'arf-pint the day before yesterday, and I'm not thirsty."

He stood there fidgeting about for a bit, and then he puts his 'and on my shoulder.

"Well, come to the end of the jetty," he ses. "I've got something private to say."

I got up slow-like and followed 'im. I wasn't a bit curious. Not a bit. But if a man asks for my 'elp I always give it.

"It's like this," he ses, looking round careful. "Only I don't want the other chaps to hear because I don't want to be laughed at. Last week an old uncle o' mine died and left me thirty pounds. It's just a week ago, and I've already got through five of 'em, and besides that the number of chaps that want to borrow ten bob for a couple o' days would surprise you."

"I ain't so easy surprised," I ses, shaking my 'ead.

"It ain't safe with me," he ses; "and the favour I want you to do is to take care of it for me. I know it'll go if I keep it. I've got it locked up in this box. And if you keep the box I'll keep the key, and when I want a bit I'll come and see you about it."

He pulled a little box out of 'is pocket and rattled it in my ear.

"There's five-and-twenty golden goblins in there," he ses. "If you take charge of 'em they'll be all right. If you don't, I'm pretty certain I sha'n't 'ave one of 'em in a week or two's time."

At fust I said I wouldn't 'ave anything to do with it, but he begged so 'ard that I began to alter my mind.

"You're as honest as daylight, Bill," he ses, very earnest. "I don't know another man in the world I could trust with twenty-five quid—especially myself. Now, put it in your pocket and look arter it for me. One of the quids in it is for you, for your trouble."

He slipped the box in my coat-pocket, and then he said 'is mind was so relieved that 'e felt like 'arf a pint. I was for going to the Bull's Head, the place I generally go to, because it is next door to the wharf, so to speak, but George wanted me to try the beer at another place he knew of.

"The wharf's all right," he ses. "There's one or two 'ands on the ship, and they won't let anybody run away with it."

From wot he said I thought the pub was quite close, but instead o' that I should think we walked pretty nearly a mile afore we got there. Nice snug place it was, and the beer was all right, although, as I told George Tebb, it didn't seem to me any better than the stuff at the Bull's Head.

He stood me two 'arf-pints and was just going to order another, when 'e found 'e 'adn't got any money left, and he wouldn't hear of me paying for it, because 'e said it was his treat.

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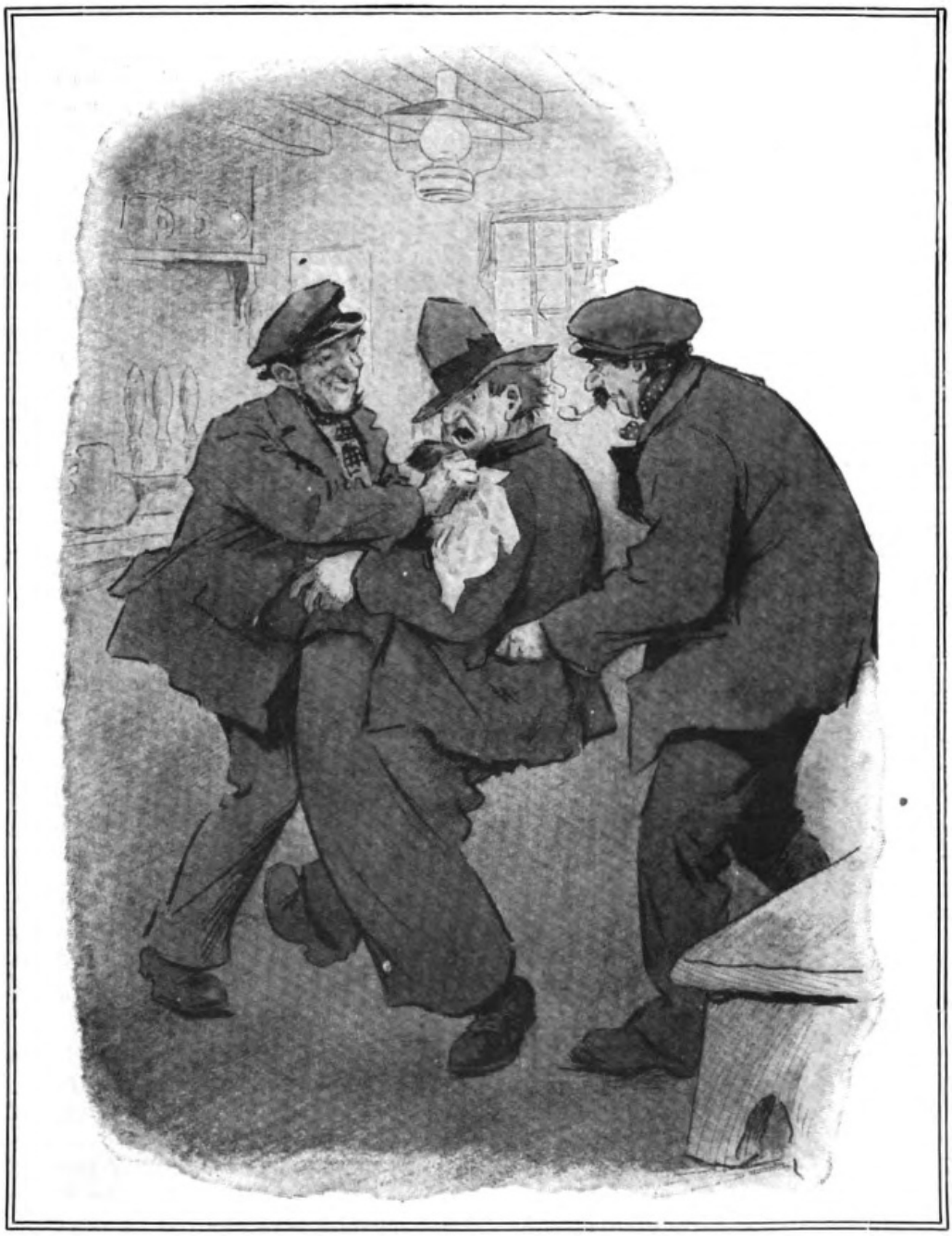
"We'll 'ave a quid out o' the box," he ses. "I must 'ave one to go on with, anyway."

I shook my 'ead at 'im.

"Only one," he ses, "and that'll last me a fortnight. Besides, I want to give you the quid I promised you."

My fust idea was to go arter 'im, but I knew I couldn't catch 'im, and if I tried to meet 'im coming back I should most likely miss 'im through the side streets. So I sat there with my pipe and waited.

I suppose I 'ad been sitting down waiting



"THEY BOTH PULLED OUT THEIR POCKET-'ANKERCHERS AND STARTED TO RUB ME DOWN."

I gave way at last, and he put his 'and in 'is trouser-pocket for the key, and then found it wasn't there.

"I must ha' left it in my chest," he ses. "I'll 'op back and get it." And afore I could prevent 'im he 'ad waved his 'and at me and gorn.

for him for about ten minutes, when a couple o' sailormen came into the bar and began to make themselves a nuisance. Big fat chaps they was, and both of 'em more than 'arf sprung. And arter calling for a pint apiece they began to take a little notice of me.

"Where d'you come from?" ses one of 'em.

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"'Ome," I ses, very quiet.

"It's a good place—'ome," ses the chap, shaking his 'ead. "Can you sing 'Ome, Sweet 'Ome'? You seem to 'ave got wot I might call a 'singing face.'"

"Never mind about my face," I ses, very sharp. "You mind wot you're doing with that beer. You'll 'ave it over in a minute."

The words was 'ardly out of my mouth afore 'e gave a lurch and spilt his pint all over me. From 'ead to foot I was dripping with beer, and I was in such a temper I wonder I didn't murder 'im; but afore I could move they both pulled out their pocket-'ankerchers and started to rub me down.

"That'll do," I ses at last, arter they 'ad walked round me 'arf-a-dozen times and patted me all over to see if I was dry. "You get off while you're safe."

"It was my mistake, mate," ses the chap who 'ad spilt the beer.

"You get outside," I ses. "Go on, both of you, afore I put you out."

They gave one look at me, standing there with my fists clenched, and then they went out like lambs, and I 'eard 'em trot round the corner as though they was afraid I was following. I felt a little bit damp and chilly, but beer is like sea-water—you don't catch cold through it—and I sat down agin to wait for George Tebb.

He came in smiling and out o' breath in about ten minutes' time, with the key in 'is 'and, and as soon as I told 'im wot had 'appened to me with the beer he turned to the landlord and ordered me six o' rum 'ot at once.

"Drink that up," he ses, 'anding it to me; "but fust of all give me the box, so as I can pay for it."

I put my 'and in my pocket. Then I put it in the other one, and arter that I stood staring at George Tebb and shaking all over.

"Wot's the matter? Wot are you looking like that for?" he ses.

"It must ha' been them two," I ses, choking. "While they was purtending to dry me and patting me all over they must 'ave taken it out of my pocket."

"Wot are you talking about?" ses George, staring at me.

"The box 'as gorn," I ses, putting down the 'ot rum and feeling in my trouser-pocket. "The box 'as gorn, and them two must 'ave taken it."

"Gorn!" ses George. "*Gorn!* My box with twenty-five pounds in, wot I trusted you with, gorn? Wot are you talking about? It can't be—it's too crool!"

He made such a noise that the landlord, wot was waiting for 'is money, asked 'im wot he meant by it, and, arter he 'ad explained, I'm blest if the landlord didn't advise him to search me. I stood still and let George go through my pockets, and then I told 'im I 'ad done with 'im and I never wanted to see 'im agin as long as I lived.

"I dare say," ses George, "I dare say. But you'll come along with me to the wharf and see the skipper. I'm not going to lose five-and-twenty quid through your carelessness."

I marched along in front of 'im with my 'ead in the air, and when he spoke to me I didn't answer 'im. He went aboard the ship when we got to the wharf, and a minute or two arterwards 'e came to the side and said the skipper wanted to see me.

The airs the skipper gave 'imself was sickening. He sat down there in 'is miserable little rat-'ole of a cabin and acted as if 'e was a judge and I was a prisoner. Most of the 'ands 'ad squeezed in there too, and the things they advised George to do to me was remarkable.

"Silence!" ses the skipper. "Now, watchman, tell me exactly 'ow this thing 'appened."

"I've told you once," I ses.

"I know," ses the skipper, "but I want you to tell me agin to see if you contradict yourself. I can't understand 'ow such a clever man as you could be done so easy."

I thought I should ha' bust, but I kept my face wonderful. I just asked 'im wot the men was like that got off with 'is watch and chain and two pounds, in case they might be the same.

"That's diff'rent," he ses.

"Oh!" ses I. "'Ow?"

"I lost my own property," he ses, "but you lost George's, and 'ow a man like you, that's so much sharper and cleverer than other people, could be had so easy, I can't think. Why, a child of five would ha' known better."

"A baby in arms would ha' known better," ses the man wot 'ad bought the di'mond ring. "'Ow *could* you 'ave been so silly, Bill? At your time o' life, too!"

"That's neither 'ere nor there," ses the skipper. "The watchman has lost twenty-five quid belonging to one o' my men. The question is, wot is he going to do about it?"

"Nothing," I ses. "I didn't ask 'im to let me mind the box. He done it of 'is own free will. It's got nothing to do with me."

"Oh, hasn't it?" ses the skipper, drawing

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'imself up. "I don't want to be too 'ard on you, but at the same time I can't let my man suffer. I'll make it as easy as I can, and I order you to pay 'im five shillings a week till the twenty-five pounds is cleared off."

I laughed; I couldn't 'elp it. I just stood there and laughed at 'im.

"If you don't," ses the skipper, "then I shall lay the facts of the case afore the guv'nor. Whether he'll object to you being in a pub a mile away, taking care of a box of gold while you was supposed to be taking care of the wharf, is his bisness. My bisness is to see that my man 'as 'is rights."

"'Ear, 'ear!" ses the crew.

"You please yourself, watchman," ses the skipper. "You're such a clever man that no doubt you could get a better job to-morrow. There must be 'eaps of people wanting a man like you. It's for you to decide. That's all I've got to say—five bob a week till pore George 'as got 'is money back, or else I put the case afore the guv'nor. Wot did you say?"

I said it agin, and, as 'e didn't seem to understand, I said it once more.

"Please yourself," 'e ses, when I 'ad finished. "You're an old man, and five bob a week can't be much loss to you. You've got nothing to spend it on, at your time o' life. And you 'ave got a very soft job 'ere. Wot?"

I didn't answer 'im. I just turned round, and, arter giving a man wot stood in my way a punch in the chest, I got up on deck and on to the wharf, and said my little say all alone to myself, behind the crane.

I paid the fust five bob to George Tebb the next time the ship was up, and arter biting 'em over and over agin and then ringing 'em on the deck 'e took the other chaps round to the Bull's Head.

"P'r'aps it's just as well it's 'appened," he ses. "Five bob a week for nearly two years ain't to be sneezed at. It's slow, but it's sure."

I thought 'e was joking at fust, but arter working it out in the office with a bit o' pencil and paper I thought I should ha' gorn crazy. And when I complained about the time to George 'e said I could make it shorter if I liked by paying ten bob a week, but 'e thought the steady five bob a week was best for both of us.



"'DID YOU SEE THE SOVEREIGNS IN THE BOX?' I SES, TURNING TO THE SKIPPER."

I got to 'ate the sight of 'im. Every week regular as clockwork he used to come round to me with his 'and out, and then go and treat 'is mates to beer with my money. If the ship came up in the day-time, at six o'clock in the evening he'd be at the wharf gate waiting for

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me; and if it came up at night she was no sooner made fast than 'e was over the side patting my trouser-pocket and saying wot a good job it was for both of us that I was in steady employment.

Week arter week and month arter month I went on paying. I a'most forgot the taste o' beer, and if I could manage to get a screw o' baccy a week I thought myself lucky. And at last, just as I thought I couldn't stand it any longer, the end came.

I 'ad just given George 'is week's money—and 'ow I got it together that week I don't know—when one o' the chaps came up and said the skipper wanted to see me on board at once.

"Tell 'im if he wants to see me I'm to be found on the wharf," I ses, very sharp.

"He wants to see you about George's money," ses the chap. "I should go if I was you. My opinion is he wants to do you a good turn."

I 'ung fire for a bit, and then, arter sweeping up for a little while deliberate-like, I put down my broom and stepped aboard to see the skipper, wot was sitting on the cabin skylight purtending to read a newspaper.

He put it down when 'e see me, and George and the others, wot 'ad been standing in a little bunch for'ard, came aft and stood looking on.

"I wanted to see you about this money, watchman," ses the skipper, putting on 'is beastly frills agin. "O' course, we all feel that to a pore man like you it's a bit of a strain, and, as George ses, arter all you have been more foolish than wicked."

"Much more," ses George.

"I find that you 'ave now paid five bob a week for nineteen weeks," ses the skipper, "and George 'as been kind enough and generous enough to let you off the rest. There's no need for you to look bashful, George; it's a credit to you."

I could 'ardly believe my ears. George stood there grinning like a stuck fool, and two o' the chaps was on their best behaviour with their 'ands over their mouths and their eyes sticking out.

"That's all, watchman," ses the skipper; "and I 'ope it'll be a lesson to you not to neglect your dooty by going into public-'ouses and taking charge of other people's money when you ain't fit for it."

"I sha'n't try to do anybody else a kindness agin, if that's wot you mean," I ses, looking at 'im.

"No, you'd better not," he ses. "This partickler bit o' kindness 'as cost you four pounds fifteen, and that's a curious thing when you come to think of it. Very curious."

"Wot d'ye mean?" I ses.

"Why," he ses, grinning like a madman, "it's just wot we lost between us. I lost a watch and chain worth two pounds, and another couple o' pounds besides; Joe lost ten shillings over 'is di'mond ring; and Charles lost five bob over a pipe. That's four pounds fifteen—just the same as you."

Them silly fools stood there choking and sobbing and patting each other on the back as though they'd never leave off, and all of a sudden I 'ad a 'orrible suspicion that I 'ad been done.

"Did you see the sovereigns in the box?" I ses, turning to the skipper.

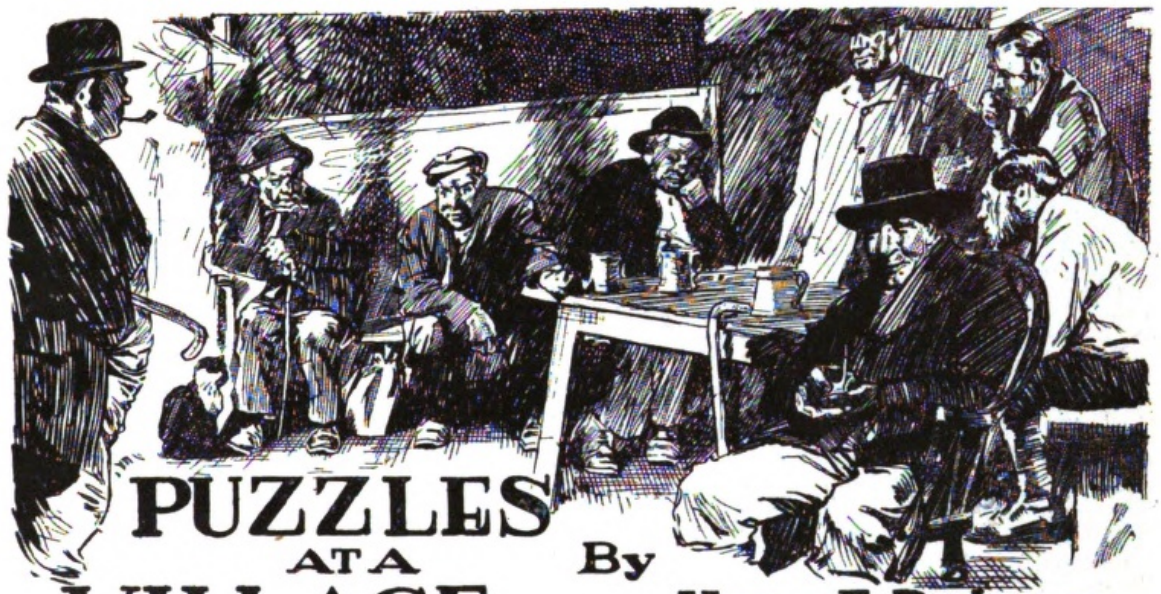
"No," he ses, shaking his 'ead.

"'Ow do you know they was there, then?" ses I.

"Because you took charge of 'em," said the skipper; "and I know wot a clever, sharp chap you are. It stands to reason that you wouldn't be responsible for a box like that unless you saw inside of it. Why, a child o' five wouldn't!"

I stood there looking at 'im, but he couldn't meet my eye. None of 'em could; and arter waiting there for a minute or two to give 'em a chance, I turned my back on 'em and went off to my dooty.

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# PUZZLES AT A VILLAGE INN

By Henry E. Dudeney.

THE inhabitants of Little Wurzelfold have been considerably roused out of their lethargy by the great war. Like the rest of the world, they talk of little else, so that it is only natural that the particular conversation which we have to relate should have a distinct martial flavour.

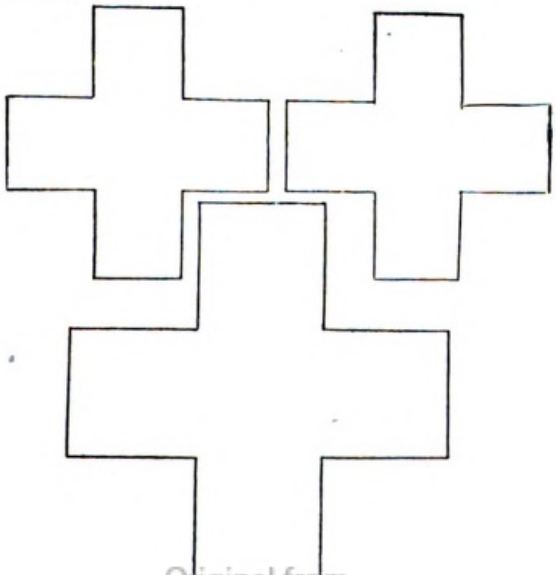
The little group of villagers gathered together in the Red Lion Inn were all respectable and respected neighbours whose ages may safely be said to range from fifty to seventy years. All the fit young men of the village had enlisted, and the opinion was held by everyone that if the English Navy and Army did not in consequence "knock them Germans into a cocked hat," it was not the fault of Little Wurzelfold. There is no necessity to introduce the reader individually to these estimable men, drawn together by bonds of mutual sympathy and a desire to forget their anxieties in pleasant intercourse. We are entirely concerned with the curious riddles and posers that, without any premeditation, happened to be forthcoming on the particular occasion of which we write.

"I was talking the other day," said William Rogers to the other villagers gathered round the inn fire, "to a gentleman about that place called Louvain, what the Germans have burnt down. He said he knowed it well—used to visit a Belgian friend there. He said the house of his friend was in a long street, numbered on his side one, two, three, and so on, and that all the numbers on one side of him added up exactly the same as all the numbers on the other side of him. Funny thing that! He said he knew there was more than fifty houses on that side of the street, but not so many as five hundred. I made mention of the matter to our parson, and he took a pencil and worked out the number of the house where the Belgian lived. I don't know how he done it."

Perhaps the reader may like to discover the number of that house.

"That reminds me," said James Woodhouse, "of Miss Wilkinson, down Bransford way. She promised to make a lot of red crosses, and to stitch 'em on to white bands for hospital nurses at the war. She bought a lot o' material and started by cuttin' out all the crosses. When she had done it she found that by mistake she'd made 'em just twice as big as they ought for to be. She is very economical, as you may say, is Miss Wilkinson, and she didn't like wasting no material, so she went to the schoolmaster and asked him how she was to cut each cross into two crosses of the same shape. He showed her an artful way o' doin' it in five pieces, so that both crosses should be of one size, and no waste. He's a sharp man, I reckon."

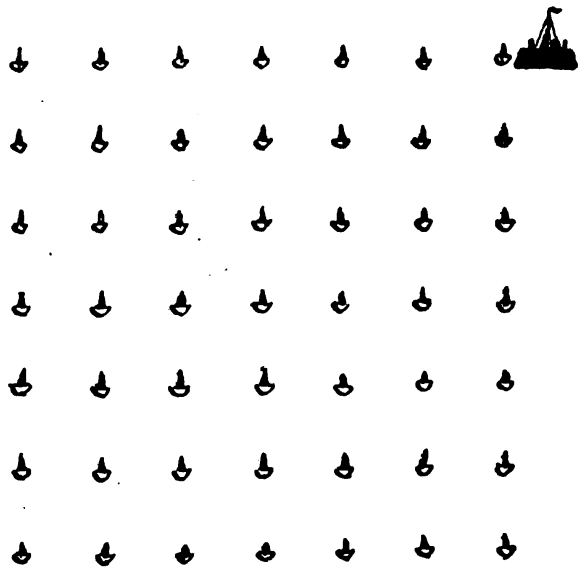
It is true that the red cross can be cut in five pieces that will form the two crosses shown in our first diagram.



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NO. 2.

"I sold them two turkeys I was speakin' to you about, Henery," said old Tozer to Henry Hobbs. "They weighed twenty pounds together. Mrs. Burkett bought the large 'un for twenty-four shillin' and eightpence, and Mrs. Suggs paid six-and-tenpence for the little 'un. I made twopence a pound more on the little 'un than what I did on the other."

"Well, what did the big 'un weigh, Tozer?"

"I can't 'zactly remember. You can work it out for yourself."

It required just a little more knowledge of arithmetic than Hobbs possessed.

"My lad Tom is in the Navy," said Nat Roakes, "and he sent me this queer thing." He produced a diagram of which we give a facsimile (No. 2). "Tom says it shows forty-nine British fishing-boats in the North Sea, and tells how a plucky German man-o'-war gallantly rammed and sunk the lot in twelve straight courses, starting from the place shown and finishing up at the same place. I've tried, but I can't find how they did it in twelve."

Since that night Blundell, the village saddler, has discovered the answer.

"I've heard tell," said Peter Pike, "that when the Kaiser was last in London he stood at a top winder at Buckingham Palace, looking out at St. Paul's, Westminster Abbey, the Moniment, and Madame Twoswords, and he says, says he, stroking them moustaches of his, 'These are all mine!'"

"Then he was a Hanninias!" cried James Woodhouse, indignantly, striking his fist on the table.

"Steady on!" said Peter. "Don't you get excited. Jimmy. I s'pose, if the Kaiser do lose everything else, you'll admit that his moustaches are his own Though every Tommy I've spoken to tells me he has sworn by all that's blue to bring 'em home to his gal."

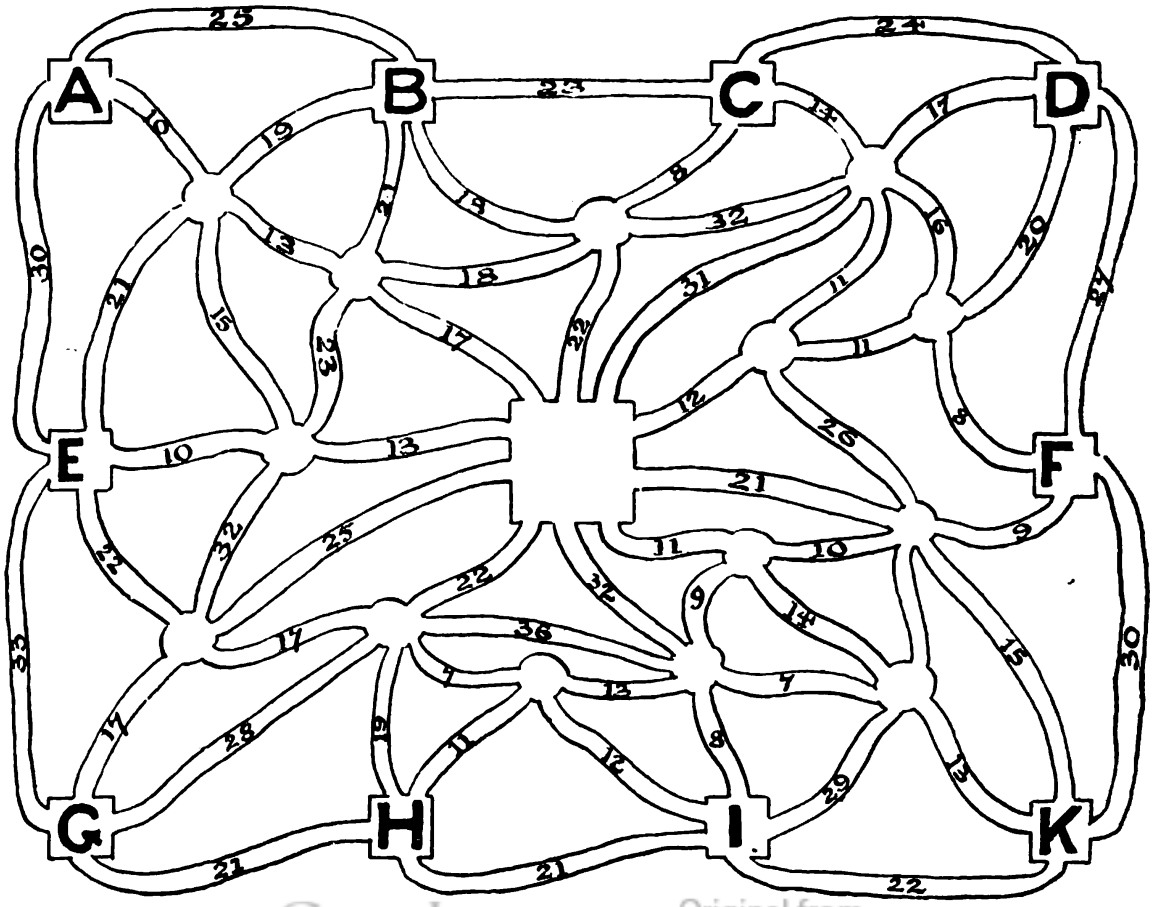
There was a lull in the conversation, when Tozer quietly pointed to a corner of the room and said:—

"That's a good sign!"

Everyone looked and saw the landlady's cat with her back up watching a mousehole.

"Why is it a good sign, Master Tozer?" asked Henry Hobbs.

"Because it shows that we be goin' to have a early spring. He! he!" was Tozer's reply.




NO. 3.

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"Here's what they calls a sketch plan of one o' the seats of war," said James Woodhouse, laying on the table the map that we reproduce (No. 3). "It shows you all the roads, and the numbers be the length in miles of each road. Ten divisions of an army are supposed to be at A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, and K. They all have to march on this 'ere city in the centre of the map, and, as it is proper that they should all arrive at the same time, the general wants to fix up their routes so that every division shall travel exactly the same number of miles. D'yer foller it? No division can be allowed to go twice along the same bit o' road, and every one of 'em must enter the city by a different one of them ten roads what you see goin' in. What's the shortest distance that each division must travel?"

"What's the name of the city what they're marching on?" asked Peter Pike.

"There's a myst'ry about that, now. I was told as how it was Berlin, but a chap I showed it to said he was certain sure it was Paris. He says it couldn't possibly be Berlin."

"Then he was what they calls a pro-German, take my word, Jimmy."

"No, he wasn't. He was a true-born Scotchman. He told me so hisself. He was a man o' the name of Fritz Strauss."

"You seem pretty smart to-night, Peter," said Henry Hobbs to Pike. "Maybe you can tell me this. If I put a pint of beer in my glass and a pint in that pot o' yourn at the same time, how much beer would it take to do it?"

"You may put as many pints in this 'ere pot as you like, Henery, and thank you kindly. But when you ask me a question like what you've just said, you treat me like a blessed kid. Our baby in arms knows that one and one make two. She can learn you that much, Henery."

"That may be, Peter; but seemingly her father can't learn her that only one pint would be necessary to do what I said."

"If you can make one pint grow to two, like the widow's oil, Henery, I should like to see it done, and will pay for the drink."

Hobbs requested the landlord to fill his glass. Then he quietly placed it inside Peter's empty pot.

"Now," he said, "you'll own that there's a pint of beer in my glass, and you can't deny that there is also a pint of beer in your pot at the same time. Here's to your health, Peter."

The company agreed that Hobbs was right, and Peter Pike paid up as cheerfully as possible.

"It's time I was goin' home," remarked Woodhouse. "Is that clock o' yours right, landlord?"

"It's right if so be the church clock is right. But a chap with a motor-bike dropped in here yesterday and asked me a funny thing. Says he, 'If that clock o' yourn takes six seconds to strike six o'clock, how long does he take to strike eleven?' I says, 'Eleven seconds, o' course.' And he starts a-laughing and tells me I am wrong. What do some o' you say?"

The company unanimously agreed with mine host, but they were all in error.

"I thought my old watch was bewitched the other day," said Peter Pike. "It were like this. I took 'un in to Master Bird, the clockmaker, to be oiled up and put in working order. When I fetched 'un last Saturday 'twas set goin' all right at six o'clock exact, but later on, when I come to look at 'un, blessed if the hour-hand warn't goin' twelve times as fast as the minute-hand, instead of t'other way about. I never seed such a thing in my born days, and it gave me the fair creeps. Less than two hours after that I took 'un out to compare with our church clock, and, true as I'm sitting here, he was exactly right. Next time I looked at 'un he was still up to his new games. So I went back to the clock-maker, and he said it was nothing serious—he had put the hands on the wrong pinions, says he. But this is what beats me. Master Bird told me the exact time it was when I compared my watch with the church clock! That's what I calls witchcraft. There ain't no explaining it in any other way."

But of course the laws of arithmetic do explain it, and it is quite an interesting puzzle to discover the time when Peter Pike compared his watch with the church clock.

Attention having been drawn to the time, the villagers one by one straggled off to their homes.

[*The solutions to the above puzzles will appear in the next issue of* THE STRAND MAGAZINE.]

# PERPLEXITIES.

## Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles.

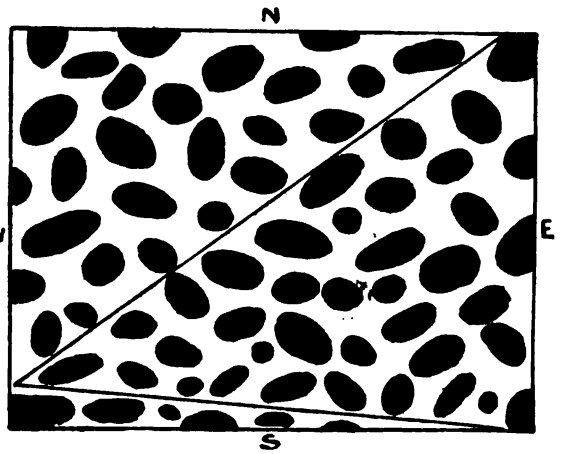
### 220.—EXERCISING THE SPIES.

HERE is a solution in sixty-six moves: 12, 11, 15, 12, 11, 8, 4, 3, 2, 6, 5, 1, 6, 5, 10, 15, 8, 4, 3, 2, 5, 10, 15, 8, 4, 3, 2, 5, 10, 15, 8, 4, 12, 11, 3, 2, 5, 10, 15, 6, 1, 8, 4, 9, 8, 1, 6, 4, 9, 12, 2, 5, 10, 15, 4, 9, 12, 2, 5, 3, 11, 14, 2, 5, 14, 11. It would be extremely difficult to determine the shortest possible solution, but this is the shortest that I have been able to discover.

### 221.—THE WAR-HORSE.

THE £30 represented half the price the farmer paid for the horse and three-quarters the cost of his keep. So one-quarter of the keep would be one-third of £23 10s., or £7 16s. 8d., and the total loss £14 6s. 8d.

### 222.—AVOIDING THE MINES.




THE illustration shows the passage through the mines in two straight courses.

### 223.—THE DESPATCH-RIDER.

THE answer is the square root of twice the square of 40, added to 40. This is 96 568 miles, or, roughly, 96½ miles.

### 224.—A BATTLE SCENE CHARADE.

FIELD-FARE.

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# A Narrow Escape

by

G·H POWELL

*Illustrated by*
*WARWICK REYNOLDS*

AS he flung himself back into a corner of the railway carriage the unhappy and exhausted young man heaved a sigh of mortal relief.

Who that ever desired motion, change, flight has not felt some degree of that wild exultation that belongs to the train? To act effectively while sweetly reposing, to recover, while others, perhaps, are idly exhausting themselves, to escape, in fine, without exerting a muscle, there, surely, is the intoxicating triumph of mind over matter (the "matter" including, for the nonce, other minds, individually hostile or conspiring), over society, law, justice, civilization, everything. Meanwhile, in the recumbent body and before the reposing brain, if one may so call it, the whole tragedy and struggle of the last nine or ten hours reproduced itself in full dramatic detail.

From its congested crowd of vivid actualities two—nay, three—personal feats flashed forth with a splendour full of hopeful enthusiasm. To have slipped the handcuffs—that was the first! How like a lightning-flash had the brilliant perception of the possibility inspired him! He had not dared to look his grim captor in the face for fear the wild hope should peer out from some corner of his agonized visage and betray him. (He had been laughed at for his "girlish" hands.)

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He could see now the man's blank look of surprise as the swinging iron struck him on the mouth and he fell—how far? No matter now. Then the chance that threw the brown waterproof and felt hat in his way—just the things that fitted with his air of the well-bred, country-nurtured gentleman, while they so conveniently masked and covered up something—well, something *not* characteristic of the country-nurtured gentleman. He could see the things now, hanging in the little hall of the quiet country parsonage. Some schoolboy or undergraduate son of the house, clean-limbed, well ordered, respectable, might be looking for them now. That was after the first railway journey, after the second run across the fields (he shook with terror now at the dangers of that open country—criminals should live and work in towns). Then, thirdly, that inspired, that Heaven-sent lie to the driver of the motor-car who so nearly cut him over as he was emerging from the village.

"I want to get a doctor. Can you help me? Desperate case! No specialist nearer than——," and so on. No time to talk.

Those dozen words had overwhelmed the kindly stockbroker in a breath, proud enough to show off the speed of his new car. And how well they fitted his "get-up," his untidy and heated appearance!

Then, to put his rescuer off the scent, to make assurance doubly sure, he had asked for the "up" platform, and then, as the lights of the motor disappeared, slipped round and caught a down train that was just starting. He would fly, not to London, but to the seaside, walk to some small port, and get a passage there. All that would be plain sailing if he only kept his head.

Four, five stations they had raced past in the express. Then came the first stop and—to nerves worn to tatters by his morning's work—a mild scare. He could laugh at it now. Someone had got in! A snuffy-looking farmer or horse-dealer. That was bad enough; but when he was followed by an athletic-looking curate—why, then conscience (no, not conscience—panic terror) had pointed shrieking to that comfortable personality as the possible owner of the stolen coat, the particular parson he had victimized—of all that might be then roaming the Midland counties! He had striven to hide the garment behind his outspread newspaper—glorious thing, a newspaper!

The absurdity of the alarm smote him through and through before he heard the clerical gentleman explain to the elderly lady opposite that he had "had a run" for the train, being detained at some parish function till six o'clock; and then he too subsided behind a paper, and the old lady had seemed a trifle disappointed. She had expected some sort of mothers' meeting confabulation to fill her next vacant half-hour. She had seemed to return reluctantly to her paper. (Wonderful things they gave you for a halfpenny nowadays! And how cheap everything was—including locomotion!)

He was now himself enjoying some real repose, the first moment of leisure since—that which had made a lurid nightmare of the mild and sunny autumn morning.

Every exhausted muscle, every overstrained nerve (he had often felt the sensation after a game of football or an afternoon of singles at lawn-tennis) seemed gradually subsiding back into its proper place. The reaction was so distinct, he was only afraid of its showing itself in his face. He had said to himself a score of times already that one simple principle must occupy his mind—he must simply keep calm—do nothing to attract attention.

Any one of these commonplace creatures in the compartment—there were five now; five adults and a radiant little girl of four, travelling in the custody of a somewhat unsympathetic aunt—any one of them, simple as they seemed—nay, all the more easily because of their utter conventionality—would be quick to notice anything unlike themselves in the conduct or demeanour of a fellow-traveller. Well, he was not afraid of that.

The mud, the telltale mud of the ploughed field, he had wiped off on the grass and on the station mat. His feet and his head were quite in tune with the rest of him—all that appeared of it—concealed in the faithful waterproof. His appearance, he assured himself again, was perfectly natural.

Even the railroad pace at which memory and imagination had been working relaxed a little. And as every pulse gradually slowed down the normal atmosphere and colouring of life revived about him. How fiercely passionate was the instinct, the love of existence, of activity and enjoyment—nay, of the order and morality he had outraged—within him! How hateful was the bare idea of crime, of the hostility of the peaceful, happy world, to his fresh and joyous nature!

The unbearable taint was what he fled from; and surely escape was before him now. Well, he had merely to use what Fortune had thrown in his way, to retain his presence of mind, to merge himself, as it were, in the

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stream of normal, unnoticeable humanity. That accomplished, for a few short hours, he would revive—elsewhere—he would forget, obliterate this dreadful scar on the face of his destiny, and enjoy to the full that intensity of hope and vigour that every moment surged up more strongly in his young bosom. Ah, yes, he would repent—his share of the guilt—in comfort and repose, in his private chamber, in the distant home where he would start that new life. But that he, the refined, the highly civilized, with such capacity for making others happy, should need to be outraged by the brute force of law—God Almighty could never think that necessary! To repent in degrading fetters, in a sordid jail, among the lowest of human animals—that was a pollution his body and soul, he said to himself, could never bear.

It was not apparent to him at the moment, as he lay back in the carriage corner, that he was flying, not only from punishment and physical pain, but from the struggling remains of his best self.

That was another matter.

The spiritual conflict was lost to view, submerged by the physical.

The feverish excitement of a contest with the world obliterated that attaching to his private moral dichotomy. Besides, it roused the sporting combative enthusiasm latent in every such English youth, not to say the fierce temper of a proud class. When he muttered to himself, with rising spirit, that he'd be hanged if he'd be taken, there was no inner voice to put him right.

"We can all repent," writes a genial philosopher, "when the man comes along with the whip." But not while we hope to trip him up, or exult in the thought that the lash is not long enough to reach us.

At the moment, of course, his whole intimate self, his personality, must remain in abeyance, and at any rate (the light reflection brought decided relief) there was no one among his present fellow-travellers likely to draw out an exhibition of his social qualities. The preoccupied curate, the dull old lady, an elderly peasant, the snuffy-looking farmer or horse-dealer aforesaid, these were all besides the acidulated aunt and—the little girl. She, he now noticed, was looking at him with curious eyes. Had she caught some expression on his face, inadequately curtained by the newspaper? No, he thought not. She was simply attracted towards him. There was sympathy in her young eyes. And he had always been passionately fond of children. They had always welcomed him as a playmate. And this one? Why, she, of course, in the happy egoism of childhood, was thinking, not of his troubles, but of her own. Strange irony of fate! She scented amusement in him, and escape from the oppressive atmosphere of her aunt. And the young man, recovered to some extent from his desperate exhaustion, his subconscious self craving a return to normal civilized intercourse, the happy *abandon* of his natural temper striving to displace the leaden weight of fear that had oppressed it for so many hours, was irresistibly drawn into the innocent flirtation.

A few words exchanged, and the child had sidled up to him and they were exchanging confidences, as indeed he had done—for he spoke their language—with a score of casual infantine playfellows before, like two intimates meeting after years of separation.

On swept the train, and on flowed the ceaseless prattle, ebullition, confession, cross-examination. Where had he come from? Where was he going? She was on her way to stay with her grannie at ——; no, not *at* the seaside, but near it. She liked her grannie's garden better than her daddy's. Why? Because there were no *stingy-neckles* there. She liked flowers (and fruit, it seemed), but could not *bear* stingy-neckles. Had *he* ever been *stunned* by one? No, but *really* (with a child's persistence), *had* he ever been stunned by a *bad* stingy-neckle? Because—was *that* the mark of a stingy-neckle? "And *oh, how you have hurted your poor hand!*"

The simple exclamation seemed to strike on his dazed brain in tones of thunder, disclosing his secret to a whole world of enemies and pursuers. That, of course, was pure nervous fancy. What had really happened? By one playful and thoughtless movement he had done that which he had vowed not to do—exposed to view his injured wrist. That was all.

In his mad terror he started forward. He could have stopped the child's mouth. As she drew away, staring strangely, from her entertaining new acquaintance, the crisis in her prolonged and even monologue inevitably attracted attention.

But had any possible—enemy—heard the words? Nay, could any actual hearer guess their meaning? Of course not. (Though too late to recall that first fierce gesture of alarm, he was recovering his presence of mind.) The idea was madness—madness!

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"SHE, HE NOW NOTICED, WAS LOOKING AT HIM WITH CURIOUS EYES."

A dark form moved swiftly across the carriage and spoke. And then, for an awful interval, sight and hearing failed him. Then, as his reviving spirit still hovered over the very gulf of insensibility, he could see that the curate—the curate!—stood erect in front of him, and then sat down by his side in a paternal, even a proprietorial, manner. But all the returning faculties of reason were summoned up in solid phalanx to beat down one single preposterous yet appalling conviction—that the dreadful man's shoulders were of a square-cut, quasi-military pattern. They were—they were not. They could not be—but they were. The struggle not to believe this would oppress memory, he felt,

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"'OH, HOW HAVE YOU HURTED YOUR POOR HAND!' THE SIMPLE EXCLAMATION

for half a lifetime. The effort to think may be agonizing labour enough—but what is it to the effort not to think, to resist inevitable conviction? The tragedy was all so palpable, so childish, that the official man-hunter himself, now sure of his prey, could pity the victim.

Lifting the embarrassed little girl, he placed her gently by the side of her now puzzled and excited relative, and took the seat she had vacated.

"Sorry, sir," he said, "to interrupt the *tatytate*, but you've given me a bit of a run. Barker ain't much hurt," he added, kindly—"the man you give that clip on the head to. But, Lord! to think how nearly I missed yer, reading the *footlong* in that bally newspaper! Say, would ye like a nip of brandy? No?

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SEEMED TO STRIKE ON HIS DAZED BRAIN IN TONES OF THUNDER."

Half a minute, then — these I think'll fit proper. We shall be at —— in ten minutes."

As she caught the click and flash of the bright steel, half hidden by the newspaper, the little girl gave a cry.

In her innocent, milk-white and tear-stained face did the prisoner read some new sense of the world's horror at the crime he must now formally atone for? Or why did unrepentant freedom seem suddenly less desirable, like that gain of the whole world to one who has thereby lost his soul? Was it not all folly, like his childish hopes of evading capture?

The disturbed passengers readjusted their law-abiding persons into more comfortable attitudes. The agricultural labourer rubbed his unshaven chin and grunted. No one spoke. And the train whirled on.



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"General Electric."

# THE DEATH OF

Illustrated by W. Heath Robinson.



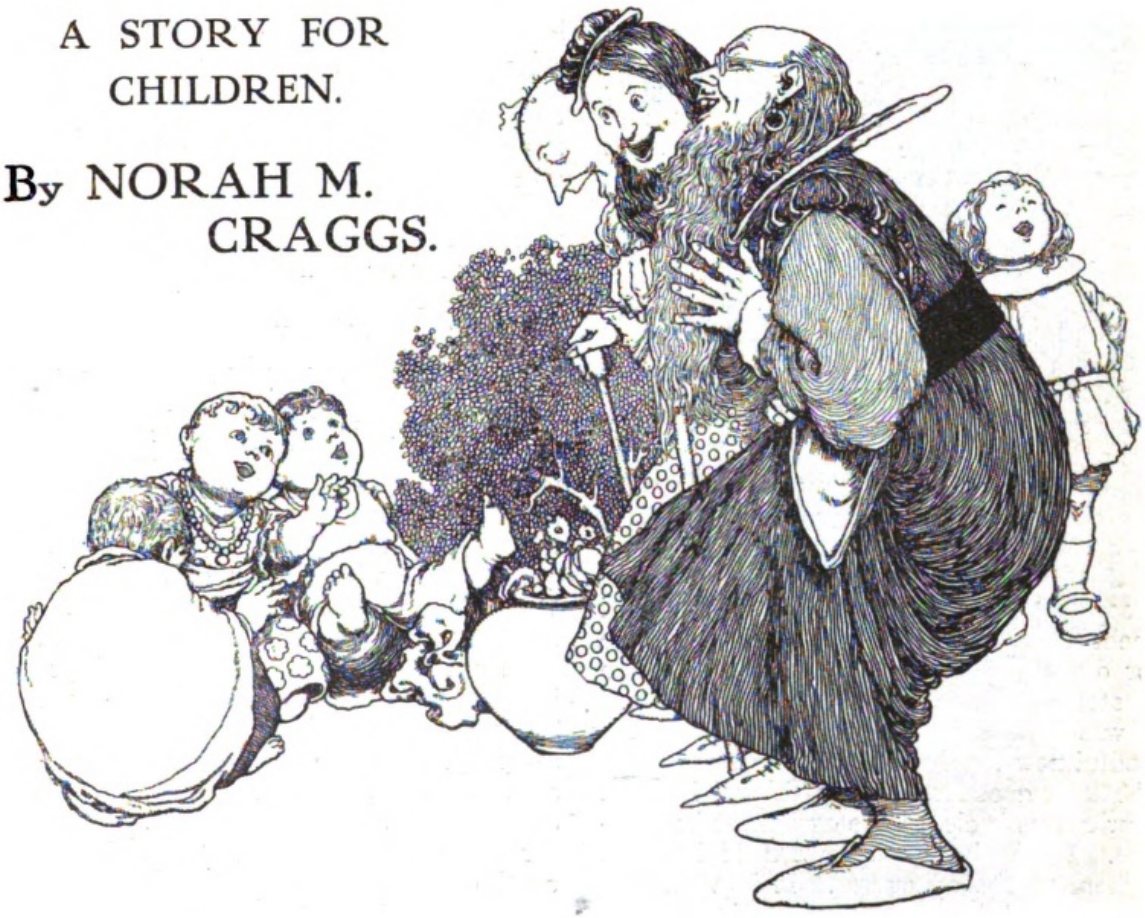
THERE was once a king, with a heart of gold and a face like the setting sun. He was so charitable he never had a penny to spend on himself, and so good-natured he had never been known to lose his temper. Although his subjects loved him greatly, not one of them, however, respected him — he was, alas! too stout for that. He was simply enormous—tremendously fat, without a corner anywhere. In fact, he closely resembled an animated tea-cosy of gigantic proportions. His appearance was so ridiculous that his subjects could not help laughing whenever they saw him. However serious the king's remarks might be, they never produced anything but merriment. That is the great misfortune of being

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# RANCING-ROARER.

A STORY FOR CHILDREN.

By NORAH M. CRAGGS.



so fat—the more in earnest you are, the funnier you look.

When the king first began to grow stout the people did their best to keep their faces grave when they saw him; but when things went from bad to worse, and the king grew stouter and stouter, the strain was too much for them—they had to laugh or burst. Most of them took the first alternative. You must own that the subjects' position was unfortunate, but you must also acknowledge that the king's life was unbearable. Fancy never seeing a serious face, day in or day out! But the king was the soul of all good qualities; he never got out of patience with the silly, grinning faces round him, nor did he let his subjects know how much their unseemly laughter grieved him.

The country over which this stout king ruled was as beautiful as it was prosperous. It consisted of green pasture-land and woods, all cosily shut in by a range of mountains. Everyone agreed that it was the pleasantest place in the world to live in; but, like every other place, it had its disadvantages. Its chief drawback was a particularly hungry ogre, who lived in the mountains. His name was Rancing-Roarer, and his appetite was terrific. He consumed more food than the king's army, and since he never paid for anything, but always stole, he proved a very great expense to the king's poor subjects. This was very wrong, of course, but if you have an appetite as large and an income as small as the ogre's, what were you to do? One must eat to live. Surely there was some excuse. This was how the stout king argued and tried to comfort his people; but, though

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they could not help laughing very heartily, they declared they could not see the matter in that light. The ogre was quite as unreasonable and much more violent. He kicked the royal envoy, whom the king had sent to expostulate, all the way from the mountains back to the capital, and displayed other signs of bad temper. The king had not the heart to send another messenger. What was to be done? This was open rebellion! There was a great deal of suggesting, and a great deal of contradicting, and everyone, except the stout king, lost his temper. Meanwhile Rancing-Roarer went on eating and stealing, until all the farms were despoiled of their sheep and cows. Then he grew hungry, so he tightened in a hole of his belt, but found that did not appease his appetite. Yet he continued to tighten it a hole every hour, and by evening it was more tight-fitting than comfortable.

"I can't stand this!" exclaimed the ogre. Neither could the belt—it burst. "I am determined to get something to eat, and if there are no cows, nor pigs, nor sheep, nor any other kind of domestic animal, I regret I shall be forced to eat man."

People walked in terror of their lives, and somehow no one had any sympathy for the poor ogre. They all marched in a body to the stout king, and begged his assistance. He was much grieved when he heard the dreadful news.

"Thank goodness for one thing," he said. "Our course is clear—the ogre must be overcome. We will offer a reward of half the kingdom to the conqueror. It is a pity we have no royal daughters to throw in with the offer, but it cannot be helped. No doubt half the kingdom will be sufficient inducement to my noble knights to undertake this enterprise."

Why did the king's proclamation arouse so little interest among the heroes of his kingdom? Could it be the omission of the princess? Or had ogre-fighting gone out of fashion? Who shall say? The fact remains no one offered to rid the country of Rancing-Roarer, and the stout king felt very perplexed, and wondered what he should do next. He sat a long time alone pondering, but he could see no way out of the difficulty. At last he raised his head.

"As a last resource, let me remember our family motto—'If you want a thing done, do it yourself.' Well, I suppose I must."

So he called his faithful councillors together and broke the news as gently and as tactfully as he could, and told them he was going to rescue his people in person. His worst fears were realized: the roars of laughter were heard several miles out of town, and one of his Ministers dislocated his jaw. The stout king bore it manfully, and when his council had partially recovered he bade them make the necessary arrangements for his departure. Nothing could turn the stout king from his purpose; he was met on every side, not only by ridicule, but by almost insurmountable difficulties. Where could be found a horse equal to his weight? And how was he himself going to support the enormous quantity of steel that would be necessary to cover his large person with armour? The stout king rose superior to these obstacles; he said he would wear no armour, and that he would walk.

So he set out that very evening, dressed in his oldest clothes, and with his good broadsword hung at his side.

The worthy citizens turned out to cheer him, but when they saw his large, shining face, his short, stumpy legs, and heard him panting for breath as he struggled uphill, their good resolutions were broken and they greeted him with shouts of laughter. The stout king did his best not to show how hurt he felt, but when you are braving death and have a ten-mile walk before you it is very hard to provoke nothing but senseless mirth. The tears coursing freely down his face only served to make him appear more ridiculous, and, though grieved by his emotion, the citizens only laughed the louder.

All the long night through the stout king continued his heroic march, tired and footsore, but thankful that his faithful subjects were in bed and not laughing at him. Early next morning he reached the foot of the mountains, where, looking up, he could dimly see the ogre's grim castle.

"Oh, dear me!" said the king. "Oh, dear me! How ever shall I get up that great mountain? How dreadful it is to be so fat!"

As he sat disconsolate on the grass he fancied he felt the ground shake beneath him. Rancing-Roarer was coming down the mountain to find his breakfast. The stout king sprang to his feet.

"What a blessing!" he exclaimed. "He's coming to me, and now I needn't go to him."

The ogre gazed at him in astonishment, and then began to laugh uproariously.

"How awfully fat you are! Oh, how funny you look! You will be the death of me—I shall die of laughing!"

"I don't mind how you die, so long as you do it," said the stout king, with dignity. "I

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have come here to kill you one way or another."

Rancing-Roarer struggled to control himself.

"If that's the case I had better try to stop," he said, gasping. "There, there! now I feel better."

Yet with that he burst into louder peals than ever. Suddenly the stout king lost his temper. This ogre was not one of his faithful subjects to be allowed to laugh at him so rudely.

"Stop it!" he shouted, and drew his sword.

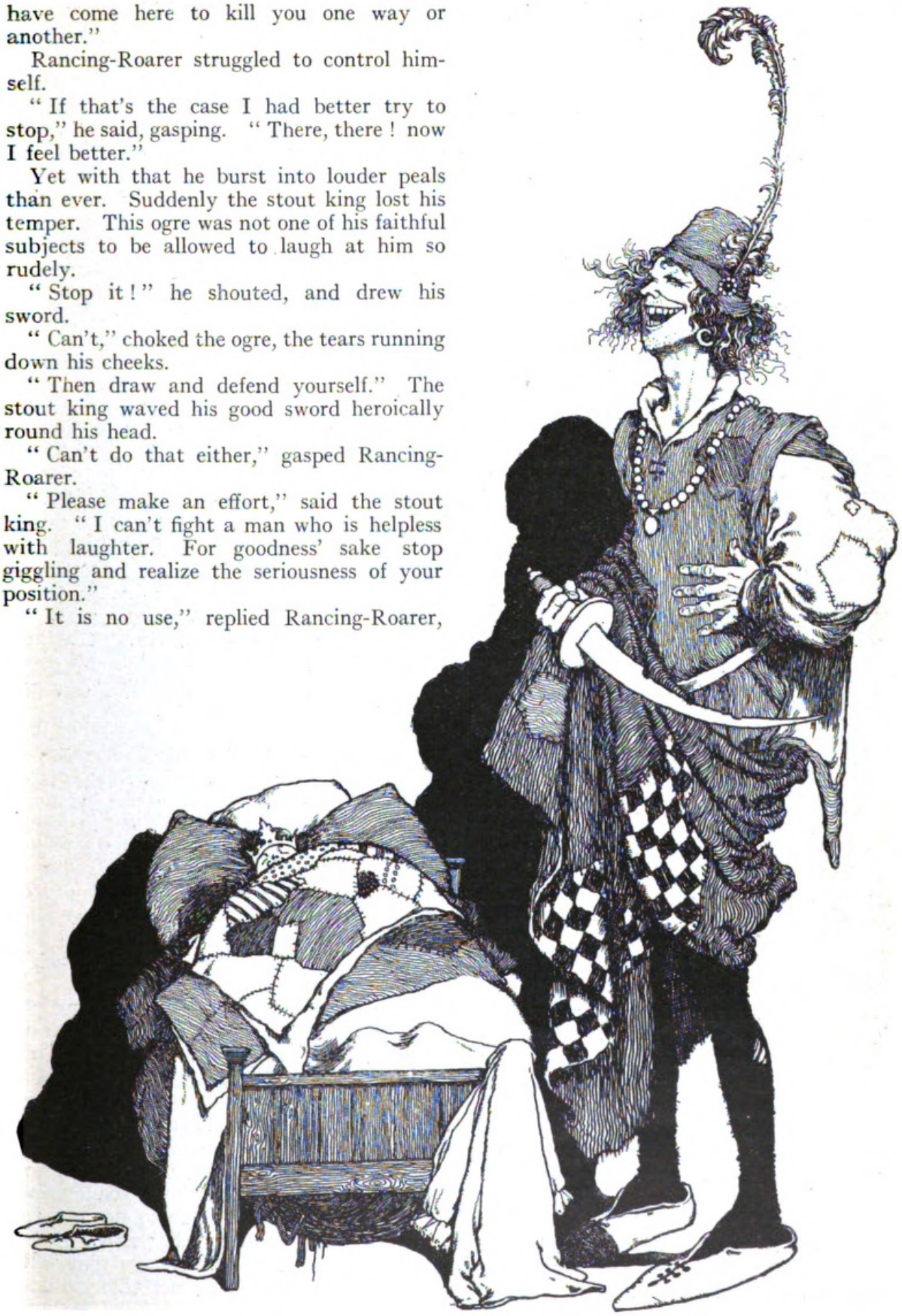
"Can't," choked the ogre, the tears running down his cheeks.

"Then draw and defend yourself." The stout king waved his good sword heroically round his head.

"Can't do that either," gasped Rancing-Roarer.

"Please make an effort," said the stout king. "I can't fight a man who is helpless with laughter. For goodness' sake stop giggling and realize the seriousness of your position."

"It is no use," replied Rancing-Roarer,



"WHEN DID THE KING LOOK FUNNIER THAN WHEN HE WAS ASLEEP?" AND RANCING-ROARER BURST INTO A GUFFAW OF LAUGHTER."

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gasping between each word. "I can't stop, and you can't fight. We must put off the duel."

"I suppose it is the only thing to do," said the stout king, sheathing his sword with a sigh.

"Come up and spend a night at my castle, and we will see about fighting to-morrow."

"Let's shake hands and declare a truce first," said the stout king, cautiously; "then I'll accept with pleasure."

Having agreed to a temporary truce, the ogre and the king set off to climb the mountain. Very tedious work they found it. The poor stout king staggered and panted, and had to stop every few minutes for breath, while Rancing-Roarer continued to bellow with mirth every inch of the way.

Long before the journey was over the king was dead tired and Rancing-Roarer's sides were stiff and aching. The sun was setting as they came in sight of the castle; they had been climbing all day.

"Oh, bother!" exclaimed Rancing-Roarer. "I have forgotten all about supper. There is nothing in the house. I had meant to have stolen a couple of plump children this morning, and I never did."

"Oh, please don't worry about it on my account," said the stout king. "I am so tired I don't want anything to eat, but would like to go to bed."

Rancing-Roarer beckoned to one of his grisly slaves—he had nineteen, by the way, each leaner and more hideous than the other, with skin hanging loosely on their bones and eyes starting from their heads. The slave took the stout king up a stone staircase into a dismal bedroom, bare of all furniture except a gaunt, curtainless bed.

"Oh, dear!" sighed the stout king. "How uncomfortable this looks."

However, he was very tired, and, though the bed was extremely hard, he soon fell fast asleep. Not so with Rancing-Roarer; he was far too hungry. He wandered from room to room, sighing heavily, and now and then tightening his belt. Then he thought of the king upstairs, how plump and tender he was. He was sure to beat him to-morrow; he would eat him anyway then—why not now? He reasoned with himself most convincingly.

"Surely it is a sacred duty to feed one's helpless body. Shall I let a light pledge stand between me and a sacred duty?"

He was overwhelmed by the force of his own argument. Indeed, who could withstand it? No truly conscientious ogre. He became completely convinced it was his duty to slay and eat the king.

"Nature," he whispered, as he climbed the stair, "in thy sacred name all personal considerations are at an end."

He opened the door softly. The moonlight was streaming into the room. It played on the features of the stout king. Rancing-Roarer crept nearer, knife in hand. The king stirred in his sleep and turned his face towards him. An uncontrollable feeling immediately seized the ogre; he began to shake, his breath came in gasps, then the flood-gates of his mirth were opened—when did the king look funnier than when he was asleep? And he burst into a guffaw of laughter.

The king sat up, startled. It seemed to him as if someone had let off an explosion of gunpowder beside him. When he saw Rancing-Roarer with a knife in his hand, shaking with laughter, he seized his good broadsword.

"So," he cried, "you were going to murder me in my sleep! Coward!"

Rancing-Roarer waited to hear no more; he ran from the room and downstairs, still shaking with laughter. The stout king sighed deeply at the treachery of his host; then he re-settled himself for sleep. But he was fated to be roused again. A sudden yell echoed through the castle.

"Bother!" said the king. "What is the matter now?"

He put on his slippers and, wrapping a blanket round him, went in the direction of the noise. He had no difficulty in locating it. Someone was bellowing like a foghorn. He ran downstairs as fast as he could, and found at the bottom the unfortunate ogre with a sprained ankle.

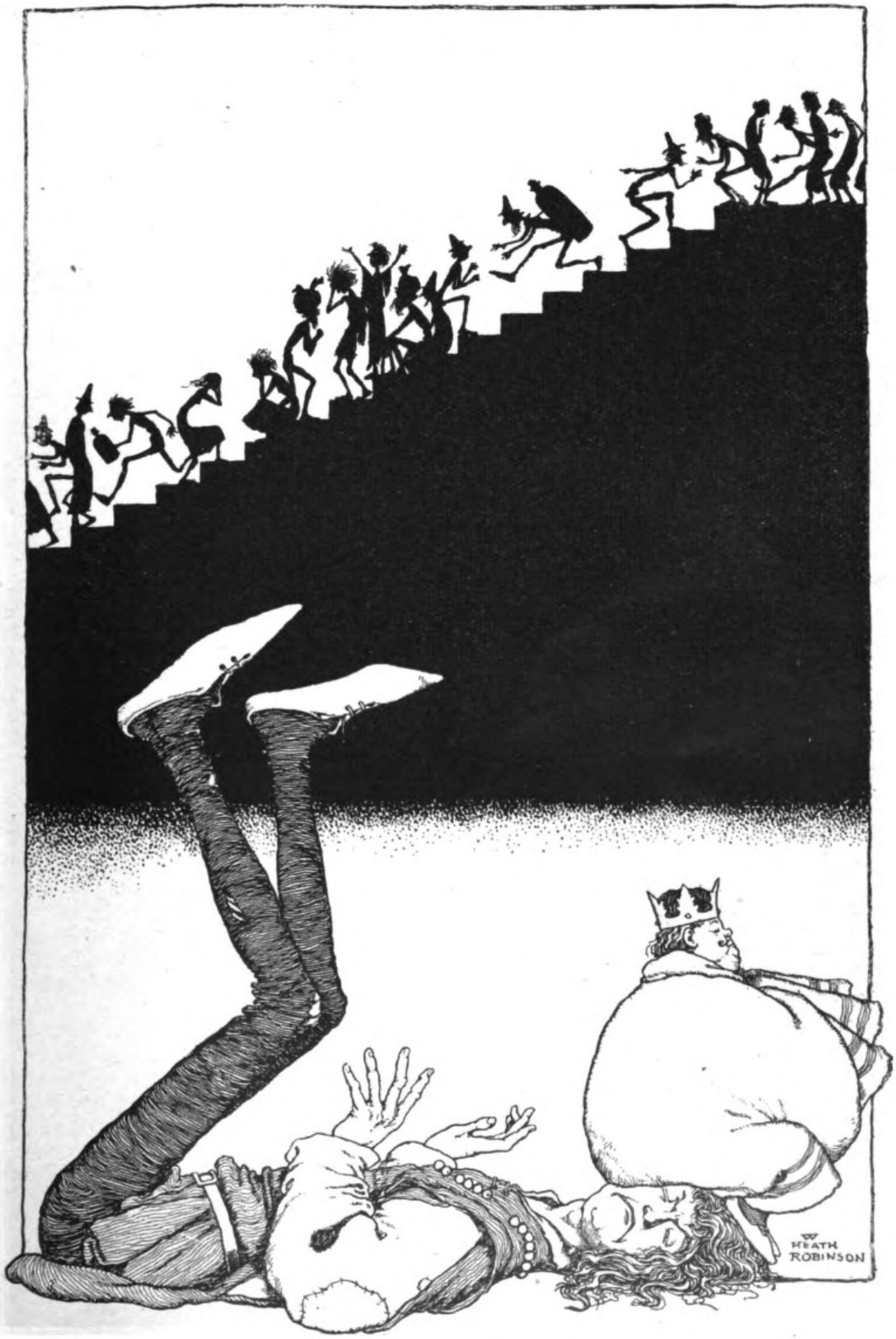
"I'm dead! I tell you I'm dead! Why doesn't someone help me?" Rancing-Roarer was shouting.

His nineteen slaves stood round him, shivering as usual, but not daring to go near, for he was kicking and throwing his arms about as lustily as he was shouting.

"Do something, some of you!" he bawled. "Can't you see I'm killed!"

The poor slaves looked on helplessly. It was impossible to approach—the kicks were too terrific. The stout king wondered what on earth he had better do to stop the ogre's awful noise—he was so very sleepy. Suddenly an idea struck him; he knew that when a horse fell down the correct thing to do was to sit on his head, though how this proved beneficial he could not say. Why not apply the same treatment to the ogre? It would

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"WITH A SUDDEN, SWIFT DASH HE REACHED THE HEAD AND SAT DOWN ON IT."

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at least hush his bawling. He drew nearer cautiously, keeping wide of the ogre's flying arms and legs. With a sudden, swift dash he reached the head and sat down on it. The noise instantly ceased, but the leg and arm movement was more vigorous than ever.

"All right," said the stout king; "I am certain this is the correct way to proceed. I will stay here until he stops kicking, and then you can bind up his ankle."

Regardless of the draughty staircase and of his lightly-clad state, the good king sat there motionless until all signs of the life-endangering movement had ceased. Then he rose and, with a deep sigh, returned to his bed, hoping to end the night in peace, leaving the slaves to attend to their master.

Next morning he was aroused by great wailing that echoed throughout the castle.

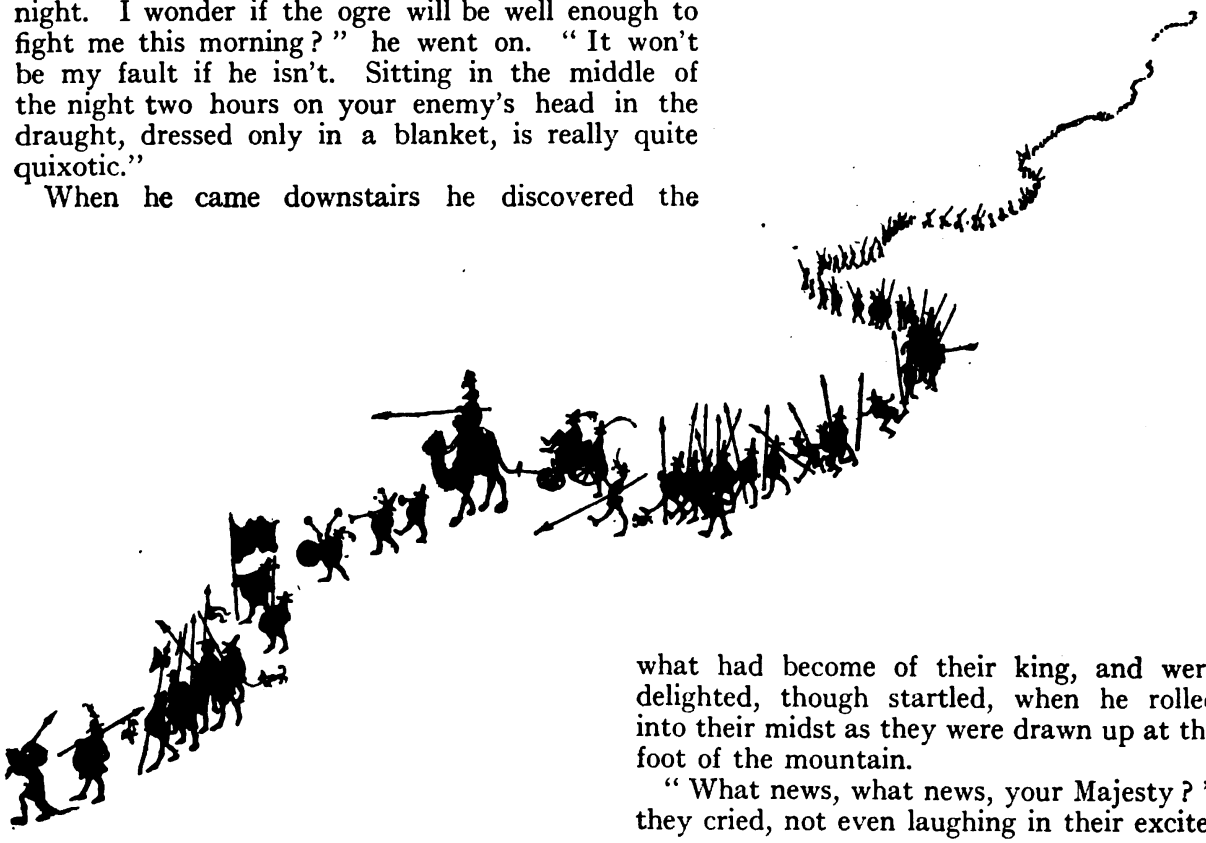


"HE LOST HIS FOOTING AND ROLLED THE WHOLE WAY DOWN TO THE BOTTOM OF THE MOUNTAIN."

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"What a noisy place this is!" he thought, as he was dressing. "It has been a most disturbing night. I wonder if the ogre will be well enough to fight me this morning?" he went on. "It won't be my fault if he isn't. Sitting in the middle of the night two hours on your enemy's head in the draught, dressed only in a blanket, is really quite quixotic."

When he came downstairs he discovered the



cause of the noise. The slaves were all gathered round something in the hall, wailing and wringing their hands.

"What on earth is the matter now?" he asked.

"Rancing-Roarer is no more," they wailed. "He was dead when you rose from his head last night."

"Dear me!" said the stout king. "I had no intention of being the cause of his death—not at that moment, at least. Still, I can't exactly say that I am sorry, for I came here expressly to kill him, and we were to have engaged in mortal combat this morning. No, on second thoughts I am quite delighted, for really, you know, it wasn't very hospitable of him to try to murder me last night—especially as we had made a truce."

He then set the slaves at liberty, and, bidding them good-bye, started on his return journey.

"Thank goodness" he said, "it is at least down hill this way." And with that he lost his footing, and rolled the whole way down to the bottom of the mountain.

Now, the whole army had come to find out what had become of their king, and were delighted, though startled, when he rolled into their midst as they were drawn up at the foot of the mountain.

"What news, what news, your Majesty?" they cried, not even laughing in their excitement.

"The ogre is dead," panted the stout king. "Dear me! this uncomfortable, though rapid, means of travelling makes one very short of breath."

You should have heard the cheers that rent the air. The soldiers were delighted. They even tried to carry the stout king shoulder high, but they were obliged to compromise by drawing him in a carriage. Through the country they went until they reached the capital. The crowds who followed him were enormous; every street was full of people, all talking of the valour of their king and proclaiming him the mightiest champion in the land.

The rejoicings lasted for many days, and the stout king was so happy that he began to wish that his face was twice as broad, that he might cover it all with smiles.

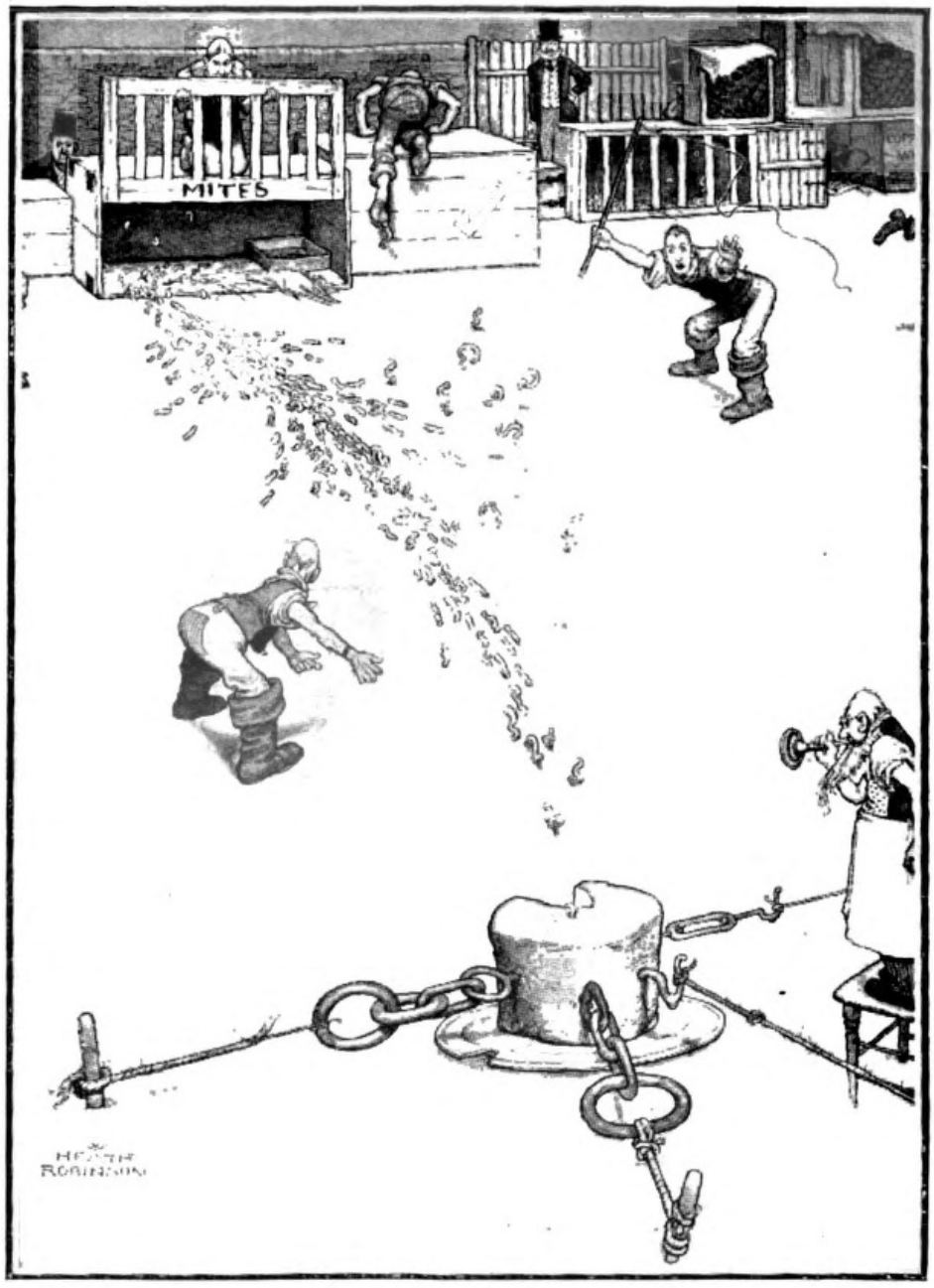
His subjects long remained peaceful and contented, and, what is more comforting still, the stout king remained so, too. His people never laughed at him again, for when they felt a laugh rising they thought of his heroic deed, how he slew the ogre, Rancing-Roarer, and they choked it in their throats.

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# "As Funny as They Can."

VI.

In the present number, instead of asking one of our well-known comic artists to edit this feature, we have undertaken, for a change, to do it ourselves, and have accordingly invited the most eminent humorous artists of the day to send us what they consider their most successful drawing. We are sure the reader will appreciate the following attempts to be "As Funny as They Can."

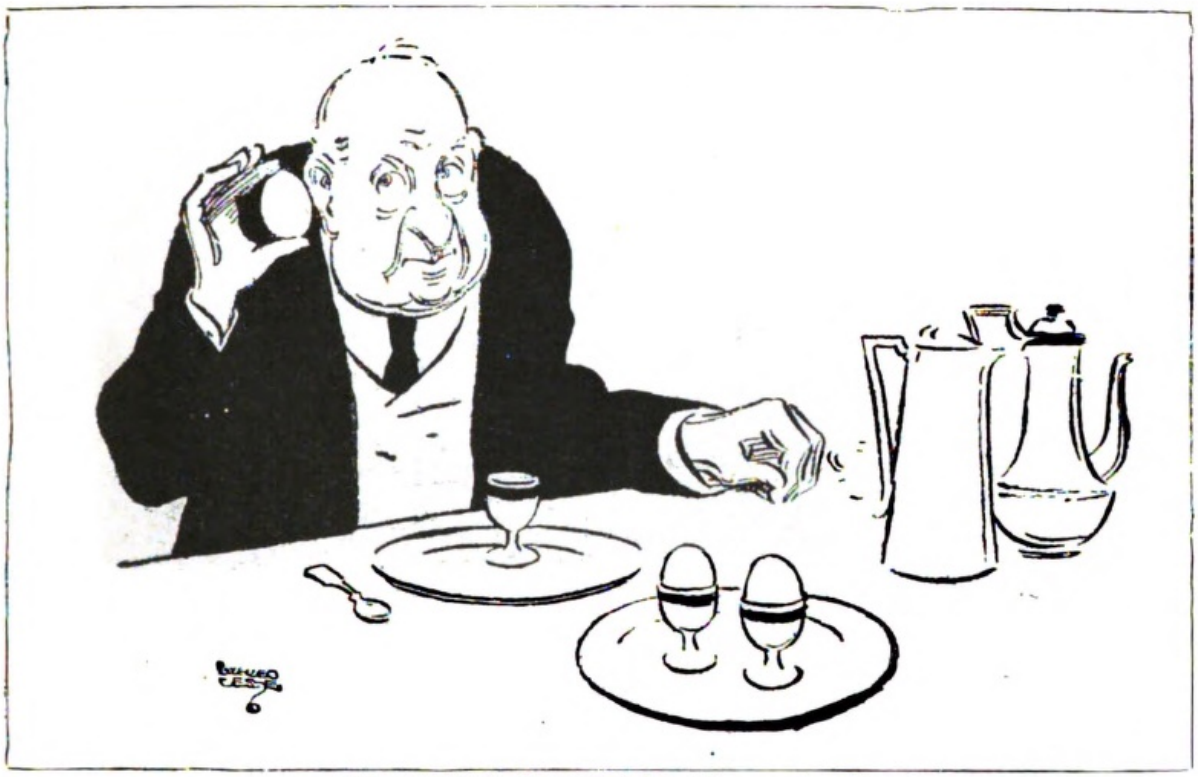



GREAT BRITISH INDUSTRIES.

STILTONIZING CHEESE IN THE STOCKYARDS OF CHEDDAR.

SELECTED BY W. HEATH ROBINSON.

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PLAY TITLES TRAVESTIED.—"Are you there?"
SELECTED BY ALFRED LEETE.
*By permission of "London Opinion."*



THE PATRIARCH: "I don't believe this 'ere about tellin' a man's character just by lookin' at his face. It ain't possible."
SELECTED BY CHAS. GRAVE.
*Reproduced by the special permission of the Proprietors of "Punch."*



SENSATIONS WE PARTICULARLY DISLIKE.
THE "PART-OF-YOU-LEFT-BEHIND" FEELING WHEN THE LIFT STARTS.
SELECTED BY G. E. STUDDY.

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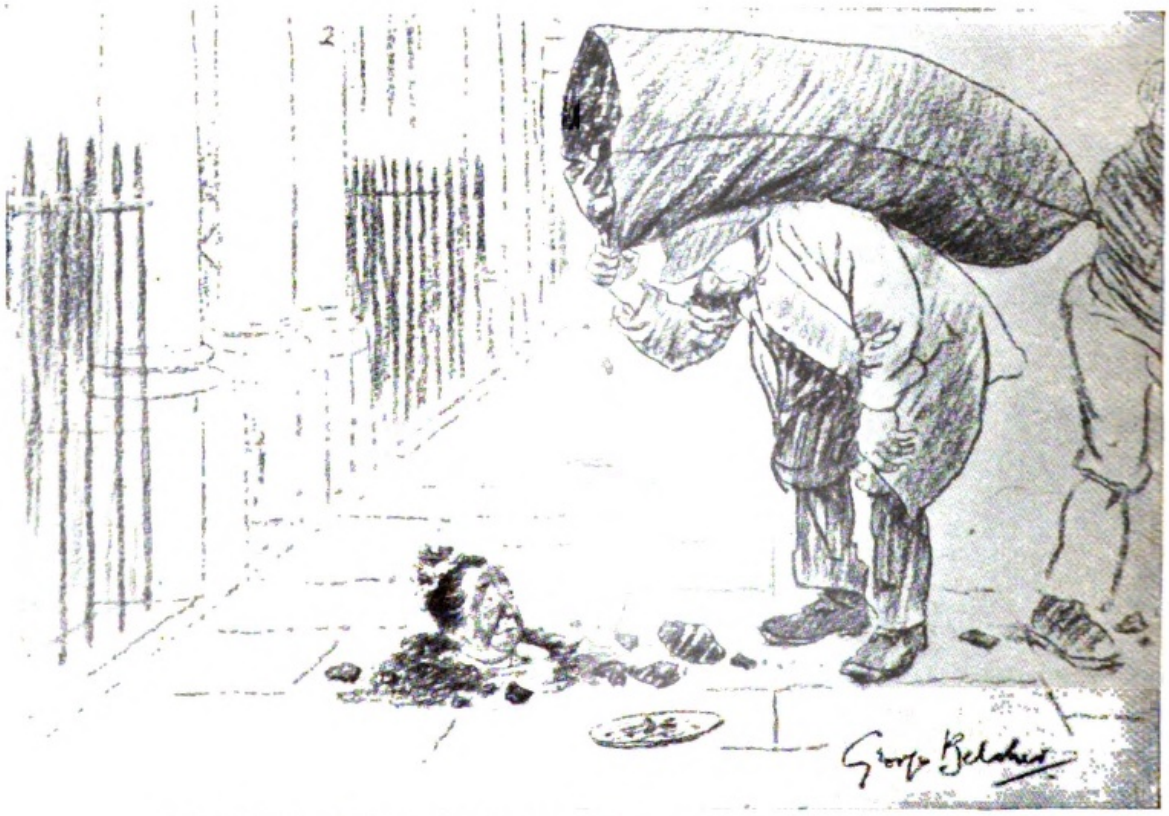



DETECTIVE: "Now, Mrs. Smith, we think we have at last found your husband for you. It is possible that he may be disguised, so will you look carefully at each of these men and say whether you can recognise Mr. Smith?"

One of the Eight (in a whisper): "Blimy, Bill, I 'ope the old dear don't make a bloomer an' pick me!"

SELECTED BY CHARLES PEARS.

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MARY JANE: "Here! that last one didn't seem like a full sack to me."

SELECTED BY GEORGE BELCHER.

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THE PROPOSAL OF MARRIAGE.
SELECTED BY H. M. BATEMAN.
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ONE FOR HIS "NUT."
SELECTED BY STARR WOOD.




THE BARBER'S CHRISTMAS EVE.
THE HEADLESS KNIGHT OF THE CLANKING CHAIN: "Hair cut, please."
SELECTED BY CHAS. HARRISON.
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THE KNUT (as he feels a bump): "Gee-whiz! What a chicken!"

SELECTED BY WILMOT LUNT.



THE FIRST PASSENGER: "I say, whatever are you putting on a thing like that for? Why, it's a woman's nightgown!"

The Second Passenger: "In case of accident, my boy—'Women and children first!'"

SELECTED BY WILL OWEN.



THE ENTHUSIAST (delighted, as alarmed wife appears): "I say, Gertrude, I've got my swing much better now. I was coming right across them all before."

SELECTED BY TOM WILKINSON.

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# CURIOSITIES.

[*We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.*]



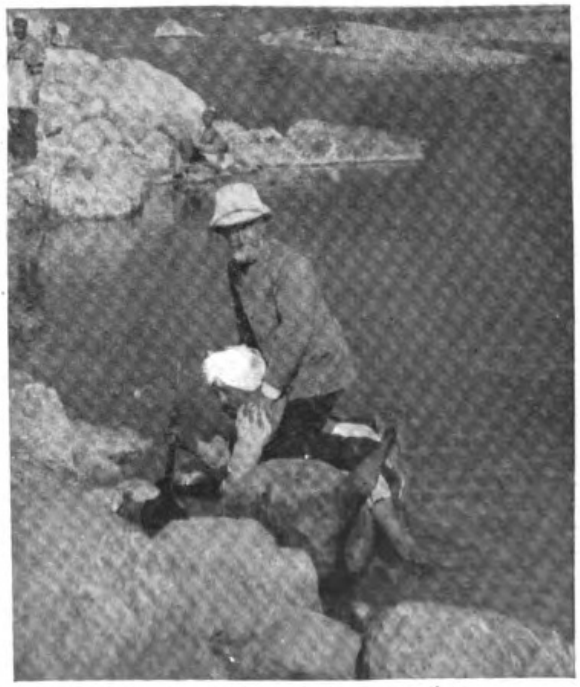
HOW MORRA, THE ITALIAN NATIONAL GAME, IS PLAYED.

THESE two Italians are playing their national game of "Mora," or, as it is called in English, "Morra." We are apt to look on marbles as the most economical of games, hence its hold on the youth of England, but "Morra" is perhaps *the* most economical game in the world, for it demands nothing but a pair of hands. The players each throw out the right hand, with a number of fingers extended. Then each has to call "five," "three," "eight," or any number that he considers equal to the number of fingers extended by himself and his opponent added together. In this lies the test, for an old hand can divine by the very turn of his opponent's fingers how many he is going to extend. Whenever a player guesses the right total in any throw he counts it on his left hand by folding in a finger of that hand. It takes nine such correct guesses by one player to make a game. This game is proscribed by law if practised in public, hence the devotees betake themselves to alleys and by-ways. From the silence of these regions there comes the tell-tale howling of the raucous players. As game succeeds game, and the wine they play for is consumed, the play becomes more intense, the cries more hoarse and loud, so that one would imagine they were dogs barking. No game is older than this—even chess must yield the palm for antiquity—and yet it is as popular and as primitive to-day as when first played on the banks of the Nile.—Mr. Christopher Flynn, 38, Brookland Road, Liverpool.

---

THE MOST CURIOUS FERRY-BOAT IN THE WORLD.

PERHAPS the most curious ferry-boat to be found in the world is that shown in our photograph below, which comes from Simla, India. The river that flows to the north-east of Suni, the chief town of the Simla Hill States, has few bridges, so, necessity being the mother of invention, a novel method has been adopted. The skin of a buffalo is inflated with air and is placed, with the four feet upwards, to float in the water. The owner then throws himself over it, and the one or two passengers sit or lean on the top of him. By means of a small paddle in his right hand and the movement to and fro of his legs in the water the owner takes his passenger across. The journey takes from three to five minutes and the modest sum of a pice (one farthing) is charged. It is only by repeated crossings in a day that a man can earn much, but so many natives use this means of going to and from their villages that the trade is not unremunerative. Few things are more comical than these *mussacks*, whether moving in mid-stream or being carried back to the village at night on the owner's back. They are, of course, very light, and are about two and a half yards long. They seem to be safe, except in



monsoon weather, when heavy rain has caused a rapid current, but at such a time two *mussacks* are often linked together, so that, being heavier, they can avoid the rocks. The passenger seen in the photograph is the Rev. J. A. Potter, of the Baptist Mission, Simla.—Mr. Harold Murray, 8, Tufnell House, Pleasant Place, Canonbury, N.

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ANTWERP THROUGH A CLOCK.

I AM sending you a rather curious photograph which I obtained last July while touring in Belgium with a friend. The picture was taken through the clock-face of Antwerp Cathedral, and shows the figure IIII on the dial and part of the III. The river is, of course, the Scheldt, and the quaint gable-ends of some of the houses are plainly seen.—Mr. J. L. Player, 158, Graham Road, Hackney, N.E.

## THREE LITTLE PROBLEMS.

THE three following puzzles, which may serve to while away a few idle moments, are taken from a collection of knotty problems, published under the title of "Mathematical Wrinkles," by Mr. Samuel L. Jones, of Gunter, Texas, U.S.A.:—

(1) In a field where there are some horses and grooms can be counted eighty-two feet and twenty-six heads. How many horses and grooms are in the field?

(2) A widower married a widow; each had children. Ten years later a domestic tornado prevailed in the back-yard in which the present family of a dozen children were involved. Mother to father: "Your children and my children are fighting our children." If the parents now have each nine children of their own, how many came into the family in these ten years?

(3) How many shoes would it take for the people of a town if one-third of them had but one foot and one-half the remainder went barefoot?

The solutions will be given next month.

## CAN YOU EXPLAIN THIS?

CAN any reader verify and explain the following, brought to my notice recently? Deal out four bridge hands, purposely making a misdeal (*i.e.*, two cards to one hand). Pick up the hands, shuffle to any extent, and then re-deal—properly this time. It will be found, in nine cases out of ten, that one of the hands contains either a singleton (one card of a suit) or lacks a suit altogether. I have tried this repeatedly, and nearly always with the same result.—X.

## A NEW PUZZLE.

THE novel form of puzzle or pastime which we here introduce to our readers consists of drawing upon a page of print a straight line which shall pass through as many lines of type as possible without touching a letter. In the adjoining column we have reproduced part of a page from a recent number of this Magazine, on which a line has been ruled which passes in this manner through ten lines of type. This is a good result, but it is very probable that many of our readers will be able to achieve something much more startling—perhaps fifteen lines, or even more—and if so we shall be glad to hear from them and to reproduce and pay for the most successful effort received. Competitors must confine themselves to the present number (excluding the advertisement pages), and all attempts must reach us at the latest by December 31st, addressed to "The Editor, THE STRAND MAGAZINE, Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C." Envelopes should be marked "Straight Line" in the top left-hand corner.

be for weeks or months, a phrase, a sentence, knowing not whence it comes or what it fits, and at last begins to write in a strange fury of passion something which seems given to him, and to his amazement this solitary phrase fits into the puzzle and is, indeed, the whole cause and the solution at once. For this is the work of the brain, which creates in secret even during sleep, a ceaseless mind that never rests.

He heard the wind blow. He had noticed that day the signs of a coming gale, and now he heard the sough of the wind. The rain, too, fell heavily. He heard it thrown by the gusts across his window that fitted ill and let in the draughts. He went outside, taking a lantern with him and came to the stable where he kept his motor-bicycle. There he put on overalls and a mackintosh. He saw a strap hanging up, a strap that the previous tenant had left. Mechanically and with no formed intention, or with no formu-

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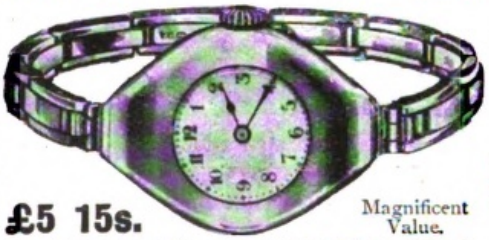
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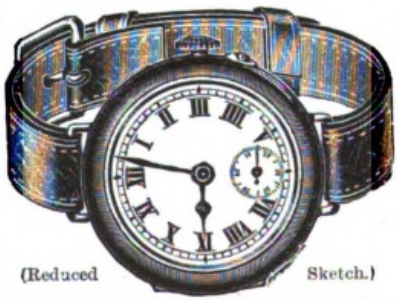


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**Fitted with** Riley's Patent Action for Raising, Lowering, and Levelling. A handsome Piece of Furniture as a Dining Table and a High-Class Billiard Table. Made in Mahogany, Oak, Walnut, &c. Cash Prices and Sizes for Solid Mahogany (Round Legs). Billiard Table and Dining Table are both the same size.

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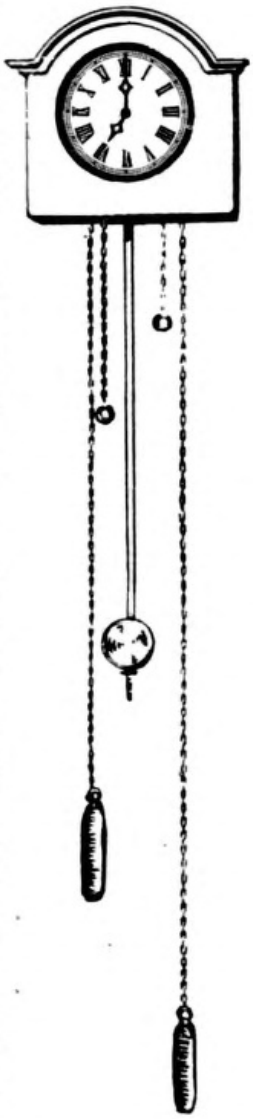


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**E. J. RILEY, Ltd., Worton Works, ACCRINGTON.**

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# Calvert's CARBOLIC Tooth Powder

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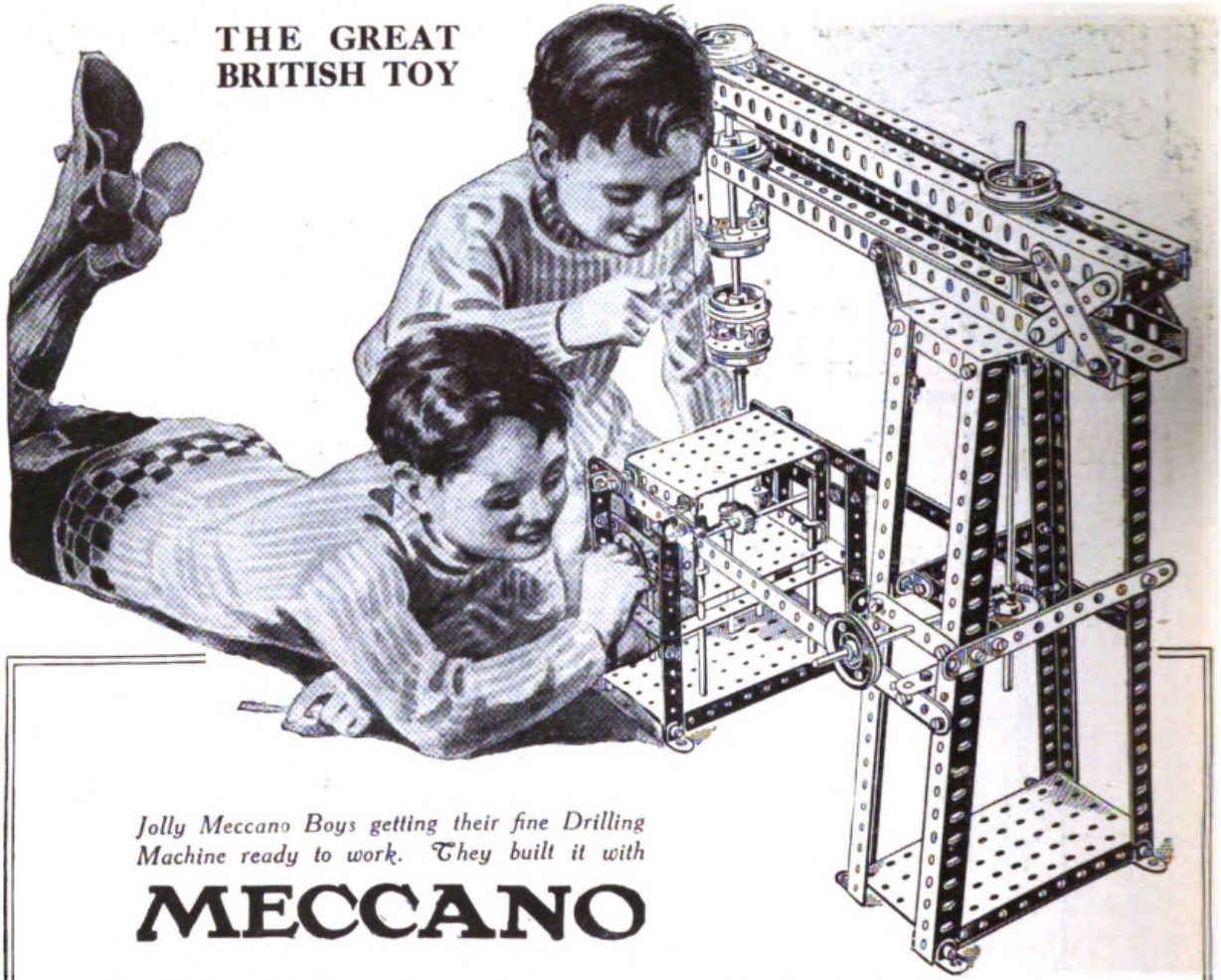
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THE GREAT BRITISH TOY



*Jolly Meccano Boys getting their fine Drilling Machine ready to work. They built it with*

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GIVE your boy Meccano and make his Christmas joy sure and lasting. It provides an inexhaustible source of fun that interests as well as delights. Every day he can build a strong new toy with the little Meccano strips of shining steel.

Each is a real working model of some engineering masterpiece—a Crane, a Bridge, a Battleship with guns, a Lathe for real wood-turning, a Monoplane, or any other of the scores of models in the MECCANO repertory. He can also build models of his own invention. Watch him build and play with these models and you will realise the wonderful joy-giving power of Meccano.

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### in the Meccano £200 "Best Model" Competition

All who possess a Meccano Outfit may enter—no entrance fee. Big cash prizes will be awarded: the first prize is £50. Don't miss this fine opportunity to turn your Meccano to profitable account. Competition closes March 1st, 1915. Ask your Toy Dealer for full particulars at once.




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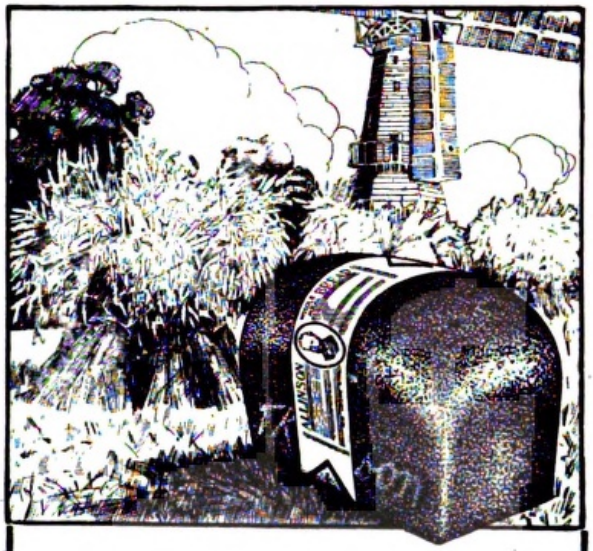
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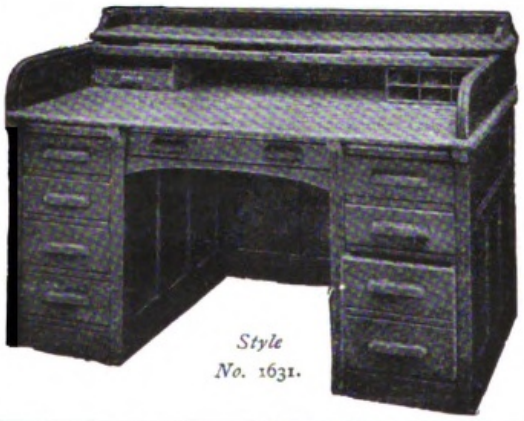
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*Style No. 1633.*

*With pull-out Writing Bed.*

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*Style No. 1631.*

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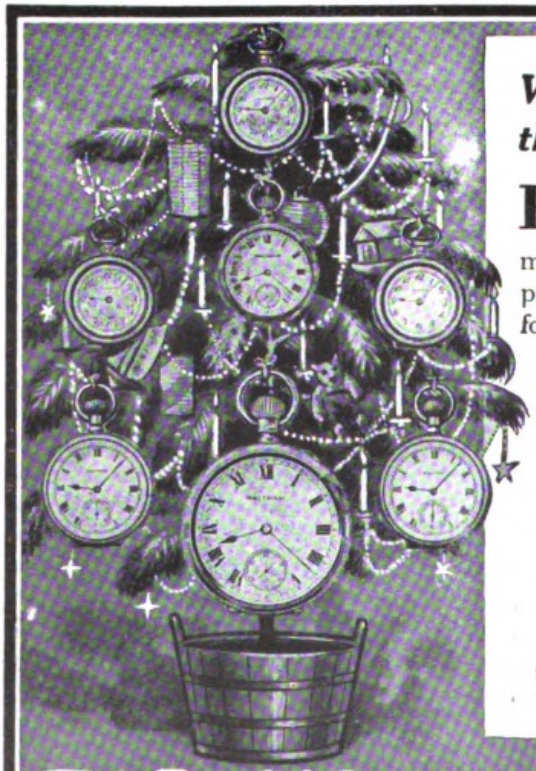
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FOR boy or girl a Waltham will teach the value of punctuality and dependability. For man or woman it is a gift thrice welcome—as a proof of affection, as a handsome watch, as a watch for a lifetime of faithful, accurate time-keeping.

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Complete Outfits of Klipit Materials and metal fittings, such as wheels, axles, gearings, pinions, etc., are put up in boxes, each size and variety of wood and clips being partitioned off. There are 5 Outfits in all: No. 00, price **3/6**, post free **4/-**; No. 0, price **5/-**, post free **5/6**; No. 1, price **7/6**, post free **8/1**; No. 2, price **10/-**, post free **10/7**; No. 3, price **21/-**, post free **21/11**.

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Simply press a button and the back declines or automatically rises to any position. Release the button and the back is locked. The sides open outwards, affording easy access and exit.

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The Front Table, Reading Desk, and Side Tray are adjustable and removable.

**CATALOGUE C3 OF ADJUSTABLE CHAIRS IN VARIOUS DESIGNS POST FREE.**

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PESCO





# 'PESCO'—THE PATRIOT'S UNDERWEAR

*(Is there any Britisher who would accept in these days the 'protection' of German woollens?)*

BRITISH in name, in idea, in appearance, and in every detail of its manufacture, there is no Underwear more worthy of wear by all good patriots than the All-British PESCO. Pesco is as British as the wool from which it is made, as the workpeople who make it, as the very weather against which it is designed to protect you.

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Indisputably British in origin, Pesco is also characteristically British. It is made to the standard Britishers expect. It renders the service Britishers demand. In it British ideals are fully realized and genuine British satisfaction is assured to every wearer.

## Be patriotic and buy "Pesco."

To buy Pesco Underwear is to do the patriotic thing. It is to act loyally to your country—by keeping British workers in employment, and loyally to yourself by securing the soundest protection health can have.




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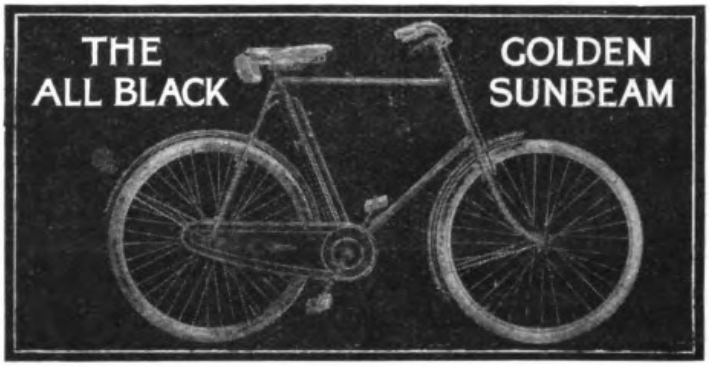
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*The Pesco Factory is situated in Hawick, Scotland, and from it have gone into training a splendid proportion of the Staff eligible for active service.*

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## IS THE IDEAL MOUNT.

**Always Ready.**

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She worried much about effecting household economies — before she knew Drummer Dyes. Now . . . . . .

# Great Economy can be effected by every housewife

in the clothing bill of the family, and the household furnishings, too. And economy is essential—must be practised.

You can get *double service and wear* from "old" clothes—from soiled or shabby house furnishings—for the outlay of a copper or two, by simply using the wonder-working, ever-reliable

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**&c. &c. &c.**

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*Write NOW for the booklet on "Home Dyeing"—it is chokeful of useful and economical wrinkles—every housewife* ***should*** *have it.*

**Sole Manufacturers: EDGE'S, Bolton, Lancs.**

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## *So Easy to Use—Makes "Old" Things NEW*


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You want to give **the very best present of all** this year—but you may not be able to afford very much. You can save shillings, perhaps pounds, and get better Gifts than ever if you send a ½d. postcard for H. SAMUEL'S wonderful

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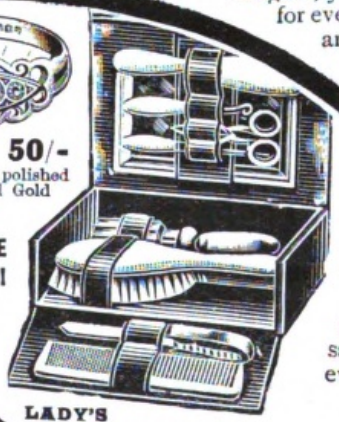


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## Cultivate His Nerve.

NERVE is every whit as necessary to success as intellect, for fortune still favours the bold. How often in the practical affairs of life do we not see nerve plunge in and achieve success, while intellect hum's and ha's and stands shivering on the brink?

Civilization, says an authority, wants less *nerves* and more **NERVE.**

To force a child to endure the darkness it fears, develops nerves. To shield such a child from the darkness until a riper experience teaches it how little there really is to fear, cultivates nerve.

Therefore, use Night Lights, and use the best.

# Price's Night Lights

93 AWARDS

**ROYAL CASTLE or CHILDS'.**
*For Small Light.*
To burn in a saucer containing water.

**PALMITINE STAR,**
*For Medium Light.*
To burn in a glass holder without water.

**CLARKE'S PYRAMIDS.**
For large light and heat. The only lights suitable for use in CLARKE'S PYRAMID NURSERY LAMP and FOOD WARMER.

**SOLD EVERYWHERE.**





THE most artistic and pleasing effects in the illumination of a Dining Table or a Drawing Room can only be obtained by the use of a soft light; otherwise subtle contrasts in light and shade are impossible. The mellow light of

# PRICE'S CANDLES

casts the softest of shadows. Its restful rays emit no enervating glare, while, to quote the words of an authority on the subject, "through hereditary association of ideas, its warm, orange-yellow colour suggests to the mind brightness and mirth."

**GRAND PRIZE PARASTRINE SHADE CANDLES**
for use under shades that descend automatically.

**GOLD MEDAL PALMITINE CANDLES**
for general Dining and Drawing Room use.

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**PRICE'S PATENT CANDLE COMPANY LIMITED,**
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# Good tobacco is a blessing which, fortunately, not only the deserving may enjoy.

OTHERWISE, the others might have a poor time of it—and we should lose some customers.

The enjoyment of the pipe is one of life's little pleasures that count and of which one never tires.

Yet it costs so little.

But the tobacco must smoke cool or the enjoyment is marred.

And it is in this property of coolness that Chairman excels. Whether smoked much or little it is always the same—always cool.

## Beyond this coolness it has the charms of fine flavour, and a pleasing fragrance.

More than this no tobacco can give.

Chairman is medium, and suits most palates.

Boardman's is the same tobacco, milder, and

Recorder the same, but fuller flavoured.




***Sold at 6d. per oz.***

*in 1-oz. and 2-oz. lead packets and larger tins.*

**Made and guaranteed in every particular by R. J. LEA, Ltd, Manchester.**

246C


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# Voltalite

THE ELECTRIC CYCLE LAMP WHICH MAKES ITS OWN LIGHT



**Exceptionally Strong and Suitably Adapted for**

**MILITARY DESPATCH RIDERS**

*Highly commended by riders in the British Army.*

**BRITISH MADE.**

Night riding with the "Voltalite" Cycle Lamp is a luxury, **no trouble with oil, matches, acid, or recharging**; the movement of the cycle generates an equally **brilliant 8-volt light** at walking or racing speed. The light cannot blow out, is always ready for use, and the supply is inexhaustible. The "Voltalite" is of **British Manufacture. Beware of foreign imitations,** which will prove unsatisfactory. Described by the Editor of the "Weekly Telegraph" as **"the most ingenious adjunct to the cycle that has yet been devised."** Price complete, ready for use, post paid in Great Britain, **18/6.** Ditto, De Luxe pattern, **25/-,** post free.

**LATEST ACHIEVEMENT.**—The "Voltalite" can be supplied with Electric Rear-Light Attachment, thus generating at the same time a brilliant light at head of cycle and a warning red light at rear. Price complete outfit, ready for use, with spare bulbs, **24/-** post free. Packing and post in the Colonies or abroad, 1/6 extra. **Free on Application.**—8-page Pamphlet, giving Press reports, extracts from testimonials, and full particulars.

**MOTOR-CYCLE "VOLTALITE."**

Solid construction, withstands severest vibrations, fitted with Hoffman Ball Bearings. Complete with Head Lamp, price **£2 12s.** and **£3.**

## WARD & GOLDSTONE

**(Box 7), SAMPSON WORKS, SALFORD, MANCHESTER.**

TELEPHONE: 7083-4-5-6 Central.
TELEGRAMS: Multum, Manchester.

**W. & G.**

# Portable Electrical Appliances

**The appliances here illustrated are of finest quality, highly recommended for home or export.**

**They give a *brilliant and lasting* light, are perfectly dry and safe in use.**



**THE "MULTIFIL" HAND LAMP.**

**Patent Prov. British Made.**

With Dry Battery. 30 to 40 hours' light is obtained at a charge, proving far more economical and more satisfactory than any other hand-lamp.

Price complete, with twin battery and metal filament lamp .. .. .. .. .. **7/6**

Weight, 1¼ lbs.

**ELECTRIC TORCHES**
**For Home and Military Use.**
British Made.



Complete with best British-made battery and metal filament bulb.

The "Cadet," length 6½ins., weight 8ozs. Price **4/-** Post Free.

The "Major," length 9½ins., weight 18ozs. Price **6/6** Post Free.

The "Officier," length 10½ins., weight 20ozs. Price **10/-** Post Free.

**WAISTCOAT POCKET LAMP.**



Height, 3ins.
Weight, 4 ozs.

**The 'Dainty'**
Real Leather Covering.

Complete best battery and metal filament bulb.
Price **2/6.**

**All above lines Post Free in Great Britain: allow extra for Colonial Postage.**

# The "ANGELO" Shirt



*Front view showing the lappet attached to brace bar.*

***A Necessity for Active Service.***

The "ANGELO" should form a part of every fighting man's equipment. The principle on which it is made and the resultant benefits make this so. A glance at the illustration will indicate just how immensely superior the "ANGELO" is to any other shirt for service in Army or Navy.

The back skirt or lappet is drawn through to the front and securely held in place by adjustable elastic suspenders. **This absolutely prevents "rucking" or "creeping" up** however violent the exercise. The lappet also acts in the nature of a suspensory, and protects the vital parts from cold and chills.

**Unusual comfort under all conditions is assured. Indispensable to Cyclists, Horsemen, and Kilted Regiments.**

The "Angelo" is already popular with the troops. Read what a Captain of Artillery says:—"*I find the 'Angelo' Shirts invaluable on active service and really could not do without them now. During a trying winter campaign they will be of immense service to the Highland and Cavalry Regiments.*"

The **"Angelo"** shirt is obtainable from Outfitters and Army Contractors, and can be had in Khaki, wool, or any material **from 4/6, 5/6 and 6/6, post free.** If any difficulty is experienced write direct to the

**ANGELO SHIRT CO., Ltd.,**
**London, Glasgow, & 28, North Bridge, EDINBURGH.**



**SUPERFLUOUS HAIR**

**Permanent Cure Guaranteed** by my **ELECTROLYSIS HOME TREATMENT**

If you desire to rid yourself for ever of this distressing disfigurement write for Copy of my Booklet, "*The Face Perfect*," sent post free. All letters receive my personal and strictly confidential attention.

**MADAME TENSFELDT,**
**122 S, Princes Street, EDINBURGH.**

# What Health and Fitness are Worth

**TO YOU,** so much exactly is the **MAXALDO TREATMENT** worth to you.

**A FREE LETTER**

of advice will be sent to anybody who cares to write to **MAXICK & SALDO,** giving particulars of the disorder or complaint they wish to be rid of.

*The following Complaints have been treated by us during the last four years with genuine success,* and it is a *remarkable fact* that in no single instance have we failed to eradicate **Constipation,** even in the most stubborn and longest-standing cases:—

**Susceptibility to Colds, Rheumatism, Lumbago, Sciatica, Neuralgia, Biliousness, Headache, Indigestion (Heartburn, Flatulence, etc.), Corpulence, Emaciation, Constipation, and Neurasthenia.**

**MODERN METHODS**

must be employed to meet Modern Requirements; and the MAXALDO METHODS provide for exercise of Will-Power and the whole Nervous and Muscular Systems, with extreme economy of effort.

Without idle boasting, we can say that we have taken Nervous Wrecks, and built them into healthy and comely specimens of Manhood, and we have a large number of unsolicited testimonials in proof of this statement.

**Explanatory Booklet will be sent GRATIS and POST FREE to all inquirers to any part of the world.**

**"MAXALDO," 65 & 66, PICCADILLY, LONDON, W.**

**Treatment may be carried out at the Institute or in your own home by correspondence.**


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# Try to Avoid Appendicitis—Free

***Clear Your System of Internal Poisonous Obstructions—before breakfast—Get Rid of Constipation—Clear Your Appendix—Clear Your Blood—Clear Your Stomach—Rouse Your Liver—Flush Your Kidneys.***

***ACCEPT A GENEROUS FREE TRIAL PACKAGE OF THE FAMOUS***

# Kutnow's Powder

**The Finest Eliminator in the World—Try It—Before Breakfast—Gratis.**

**"Appendicitis"** is a very painful and dangerous inflammatory disease of the Appendix, a small blind passage, some four inches in length, close to the termination of the intestines. The trouble starts from the irritation set up by some indigestible and insoluble foreign body penetrating the wall of the Appendix and causing a painful abscess. This generally necessitates an operation.

**Alarming Increase of Appendicitis:** There is no doubt a season for the increase of this disease, and the season is Christmas time. This is due to the fact that we eat far more than at other times, and especially many indigestible and insoluble things, such as grape stones, etc. These, as a rule, pass through the system harmlessly, but there are times when they lodge in the Appendix and, unless cleared out, may suddenly set up Appendicitis.

**Try and Prevent an Attack:**—If you eat more than Nature requires, she looks to you to get rid of the poisonous waste by clearing the system—next morning—before breakfast—otherwise she may afflict you with an attack of Appendicitis. You can make a start towards safety by sending the free trial coupon for a package of the famous morning eliminator, Kutnow's Powder.

**Don't Wait Until You're Too Late!** It may be your turn next to have an attack, with the risk of a painful operation, unless you clear your system periodically with Kutnow's Powder.

**A Surgical Paper,** in an article on The Dangers of Constipation, said: "Ignorance is dangerous, but neglect is worse and almost criminal. Ignorance of the proper method of treating constipation is exemplified in the use of drastic purgatives—drugs—salts, etc.—which excoriate, gripe, and weaken still more the existing impaired peristalsis (bowel movement). The only correct means of permanently removing the dangers of constipation is a remedy acting as an evacuator and a flusher, toning up the weak condition of the intestines and at the same time flushing them without pain, disinfecting the alimentary and urinary channels. **Such a remedy is found in Kutnow's Powder.** It acts gently but effectively on the liver, gall, kidneys, and bladder, destroys and removes all toxicant micro-organisms, and restores the natural functions to healthy vitality."

**A Medical Journal** said: "We can surely call Kutnow's Powder the most ideal and scientific remedy of the day, as it properly eliminates all noxious waste and toxic poisons accumulated in the alimentary and urinary tracts, without producing any harsh after-effect or a relapse to sluggishness of the inner organs, which is the principal point in all diseases caused by faulty metabolism. Its use is inexhaustive to practitioners."

Kutnow's Powder will very quickly relieve you of the following ailments and disorders:—

—**Constipation** by clearing the system
—**Dyspepsia** by cleansing the stomach
—**Liverishness** by rousing the liver
—**Skin Eruptions** by clearing the blood
—**Headache** by reducing blood-pressure
—**Depression** by relieving the brain
—**Gout, Rheumatism, and Sciatica** by dissolving and expelling uric acid
—**Kidney Troubles** by flushing the kidneys
—**Urinary Ills** by clearing the bladder

**IMPORTANT NOTICE.**

## HOSPITAL WAR SERVICE

**FREE OF CHARGE**

**Doctors, Nurses, and Hospitals** are invited to apply at once for Physicians' Sample Bottles of Kutnow's Powder for the use of the sick and wounded, both at the front and at home. All applications will be dealt with promptly and supplies sent carriage paid. Applications to be made by letter, envelopes marked

**Hospital War Service,** and addressed to

Messrs. S. Kutnow & Co., Ld.,
41, Farringdon Road, London, E.C.

**Kutnow's Powder is a high-class British Preparation—Made in England only—Established over a quarter of a Century—It is extensively used in the principal Hospitals and Nursing Homes both at Home and Abroad.**

## THE FREE TRIAL COUPON

*To* S. KUTNOW & CO., LD.,
41, Farringdon Road, London, E.C.

Kindly send me a free trial package of Kutnow's Powder—post-paid—for a personal test.

*Fill in your Name and Address.*

*NAME*.....

*ADDRESS*.....

STRAND MAGAZINE, December, 1914.

If posted in open envelope you need only affix ½d. stamp.

AFTER FREE TRIAL *Kutnow's Powder should be obtainable at any Chemist or Stores at 2/9 per bottle, or you can get it post free for 3/- from Kutnow's London Office to any place in U.K. Reject any suggested substitutes.*

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# Half Price

of good class ordinary cocoa.

## THREE CUPS A PENNY.

The wonderful new food beverage

# PLASMON OAT-COCOA

—a combination of the celebrated Plasmon Oat-Food and PURE COCOA—

**LEAST COST**

**MOST NOURISHMENT**

**FINE CHOCOLATE FLAVOUR**

Procurable through all chemists, grocers or stores. If not, send P.O. or stamps and it will be forwarded post free. Manufactured solely by PLASMON, LTD. (Dept. O), Farringdon Street, London, E.C.

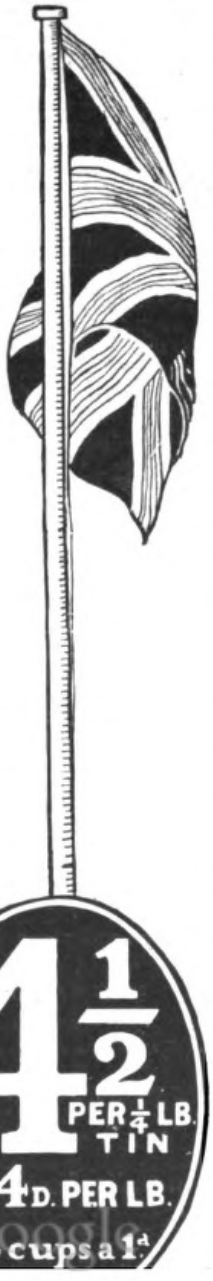
**NO INCREASE IN PRICE OF PLASMON FOODS**

**ALL BRITISH**

**PLASMON CHOCOLATE**

**is supplied as an Emergency Ration to the**

**BRITISH TROOPS**



4½ PER ¼ LB. TIN

1S. 4D. PER LB.

3 cups a 1d.

# NEW INVENTION

## Diseases Banished without Drugs.

**SENT ON THIRTY DAYS' TRIAL.**

***Write for Special Offer this Month.***

The **"Century Thermal"** Bath Cabinet gives you at home, for 1½d. each, all the marvellous cleansing, invigorating, curative effects of the famous Turkish Baths. Opens the 7,000,000 skin pores, purifies the entire system. Equals Hot Springs. Prevents disease. Saves doctors' bills. Has cured thousands. **Nature's drugless remedy for colds, influenza, rheumatism, aches, pains, blood and skin diseases, kidney trouble, and most diseases.**

**PHYSICIANS ASTONISHED,**

AND THOUSANDS of grateful users testify to the wonderful results obtained.

Mr. W. B., of Glasgow, invalid for fourteen years, baffled best doctors, testifies that it **cured him of weak heart, sleeplessness, nervous dyspepsia, and biliousness.**

Madame COLLINGE, of Paris, testifies it **cured her of Bright's and Kidney Disease.**



**Inside or Outside Heater.**

Mr. G. A. D., Sussex, afflicted fifteen years, and attended by ten different doctors, after twelve baths in six weeks, permanently cured of **Eczema.**

Mr. R. H., London, S.E., writes as to a complete cure of **Chronic Catarrh, Indigestion, and Constipation** in his own case, and **Dropsy** in his wife's case.

Rev. W. W., Salop; Rev. A. W., Great Yarmouth; Rev. T. E. S. C., Lancs.; Rev. J. W. D., Walsall; Rev. O. H., Mountain Ash; and hundreds of others recommend the "Century Thermal" highly for the cure of **Bright's Disease, Lumbago, Sciatica, Rheumatism, Bronchitis, Gout.**

Mr. G. W. S., of Manchester, afflicted for years, was **cured of Nervous Prostration, Headaches, Indigestion, Insomnia, and Mental Exhaustion.**

Mr. J. W. F., of Bury, testifies that it **did his wife more good** in five weeks **than two years' doctoring. Cured her of Blood Poisoning, and others of Lumbago and Influenza.**

Mrs. O. L., of Kensington, after suffering for years, and being a total invalid from **Rheumatic Arthritis,** spending pounds on doctors' bills and visits to Buxton, was **completely cured** after using the "Century Thermal."

Hundreds of others testify to marvellous cures.

**WRITE TO-DAY** and get our Free Illustrated Book, No. 574, and testimonials from hundreds of delighted people. Mention STRAND MAGAZINE.

Don't think you can't afford it. Write us and we will make you such a proposition as to enable you to possess a "Century Thermal" free of all cost to yourself.

***AGENTS WANTED.***

**CENTURY THERMAL BATH CABINET, Ltd.**


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# Give him a Gillette Safety Razor for Christmas.

What Christmas Gift can you think of more acceptable or more practical for a man than a Gillette Safety Razor?

It is something he will use every day. It makes his shaving easy and simple where it has always been troublesome—economizes his time and saves his money.

The Gillette is the razor that any man can use—even if he has never shaved himself before—and always with absolute safety.

It is the only razor, too, that he can adjust to suit the growth of his beard and the tenderness of his skin.

## Do your Christmas shopping early—get him a

NO STROPPING NO HONING

TRADE Gillette MARK

SAFETY RAZOR

Many different styles in handsome leather or silver-plated cases to choose from. Prices from One Guinea to Ten. **British Made.** Complete illustrated catalogue on application. Please mention the STRAND MAGAZINE.

GILLETTE SAFETY RAZOR, LTD., 40/44, HOLBORN VIADUCT, LONDON, E.C. General Offices and Works: Leicester, Eng.

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# The Best Method of Infant Feeding.




All these are portraits of children fed on the "Allenburys" Foods.

The remarks appearing underneath each picture are extracts taken from the letters received with the photographs.

The "Allenburys" Foods provide a complete dietary, and children thrive upon them as on no other diet.

**Milk Food No. 1**
From birth to 3 months.

**Milk Food No. 2**
From 3 to 6 months.

**Malted Food No. 3**
From 6 months.

Pamphlet, "Infant Feeding and Management," sent free.

**Allen & Hanburys Ltd.,**
Lombard St., London.

## The 'Allenburys' Foods

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*Pamphlet, "Infant Feeding and Management," sent free on* ***request.***

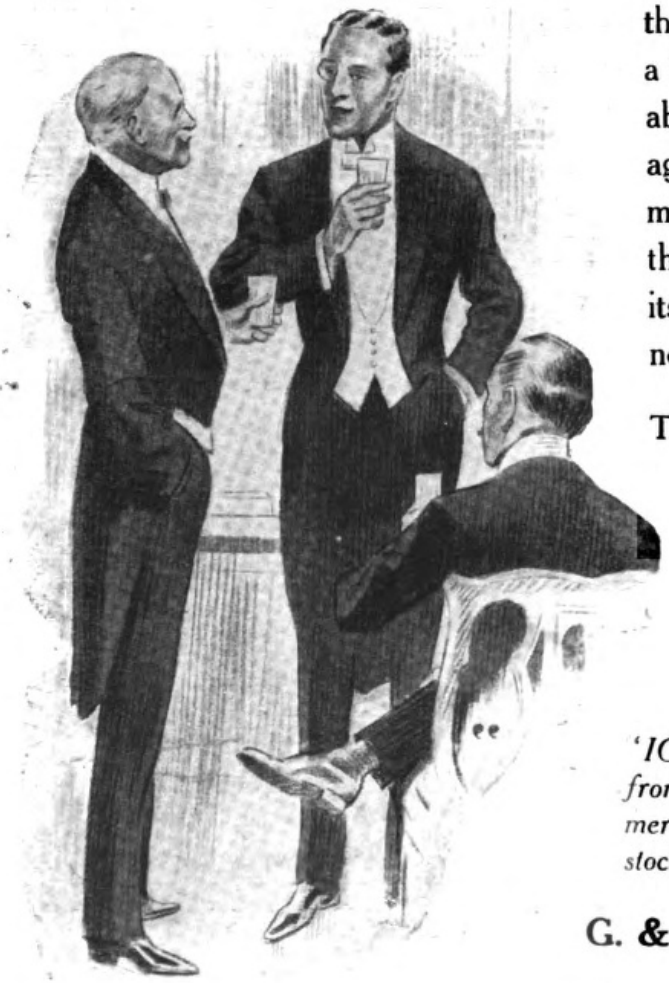
## Allen & Hanburys Ltd.

37, Lombard Street, LONDON.


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# "IONA" SCOTCH WHISKY.

## In Clubland where men are most critical, "IONA" is recognised as the perfection in Scotch Whiskies.



It immediately appeals to the man who appreciates a fully matured whisky of absolute purity. Of great age, it possesses a delicate mellow flavour that pleases the palate, and because of its absolute purity it has no unpleasant after-effects.

Those who seek a tonic beverage of the highest standard will find it in "IONA," combining as it does characteristic quality with distinctive flavour.

*'IONA" can be obtained from your wine and spirit merchant. If he hasn't it in stock he can get it for you.*

**G. & J. Maclachlan, Ltd., Glasgow.**

**Auchentoshan Distillery, N.B.** *Established 1820.*

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# INTESTINAL TORPOR.

## Languor, Loss of Appetite, etc.

### The New Scientific Laxative.

It is now recognised that by its lubricating properties on the walls of the intestines, the effect of Paraffin (Petroleum) is to cause an easy, gentle, and natural movement of the bowels and to re-educate the natural functions.

By long-continued Scientific Research a means has now been found to manufacture Paraffin in a **PERFECTLY TASTELESS FORM** of sweet Malty powder, palatable, and agreeable for children and adults.

Dia-Paraffin is a powerful inhibitor of Bacterial growth, and as a soothing and healing anti-toxic for inflamed areas incapable of being reached by other means, it forms an ideal agent. Its **LAXATIVE** properties are natural and without strain, and it is remarkable for the entire **ABSENCE OF AFTER-EFFECTS**, such as follow the use of ordinary aperients; the latter not only irritate the delicate mucous membrane, but aggravate the condition by producing a binding effect and further inactivity. Dia-Paraffin has none of these after-effects, but **MAINTAINS THE NATURAL ACTIVITY OF THE BOWELS,** soothes and lubricates. Price **1/-** and **2/6.**

# "DIA-PARAFFIN"

April 2nd, 1914.

"I suffer internally throughout the intestines and bowels. I have been recommended the Liquid Paraffin, but its oily nature rebelled with my stomach; your DIA-PARAFFIN is more palatable. I can take it quite easily."

March 18th, 1914.

"The first dose gave me the first natural action that I have had for upwards of 30 years."

April 1st, 1914.

"DIA-PARAFFIN makes an excellent addition to cocoa or tea, and is most palatable. I think DIA-PARAFFIN an excellent substitute for ordinary correctives."

May 9th, 1914.

"I cannot speak too highly of DIA-PARAFFIN both as an alterative and general lubricator of the system."

**Obtainable through any Chemist or Stores, or from**

**THE DIAMALT CO.**

**(Dept. 19), 36, QUEEN STREET, LONDON, E.C.**

**FREE COUPON.**

A large Free Sample of Dia-Paraffin will be sent in exchange for this coupon and three penny stamps for postage, etc.

DIAMALT CO. (Dept. 19), 36, QUEEN STREET, LONDON, E.C.

Name.....

Address .....

.....

*Strand*, December, 1914.

# THE IDEAL BED

**FOR INDUCING HEALTHY & REFRESHING SLEEP.**

Perfect Comfort, Resilience & Durability.
Does Not Sag, or Get Hard or Lumpy.
Perfectly Ventilated. Easily Rolled Up.
Can Be Used on Either Side.

## The 'WOOLVO'

Ventilated Sanitary Spring MATTRESS

**EXCELLENT IN QUALITY MODERATE IN PRICE**

**MATTRESS:**

*(full size)*

**Made in Pure Sterilised "WOOLVO," from 45/-**

Illustrated Price List will be sent on application to the

*Manufacturers:*

**'WOOLVO' BEDDING WORKS,**

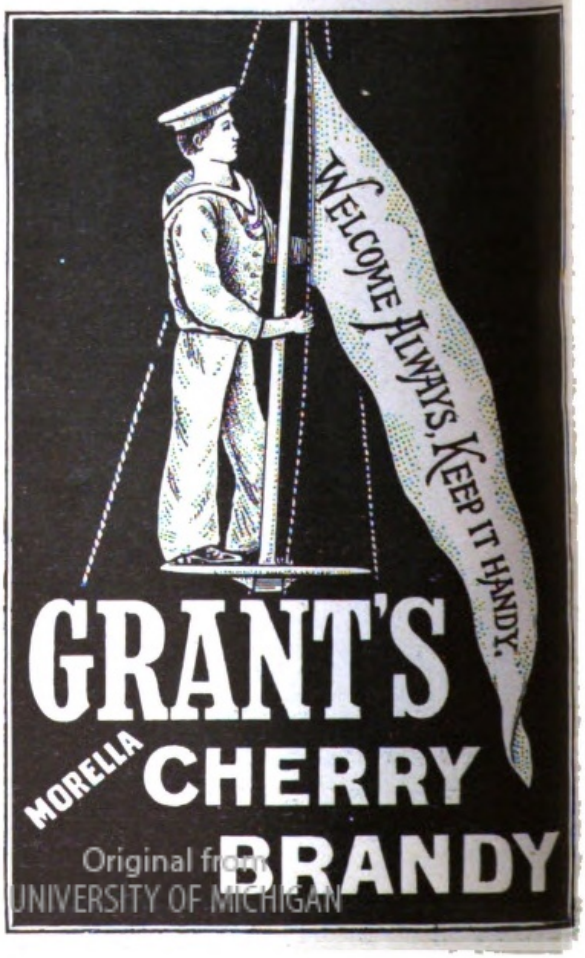
Dept. A,

**Cable St., Manchester.**




Patent 19681.

**Showing method of construction.**





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**THE TOAST IS "BRITAIN." By Fred Roe, R.I.**

Hung on the line' in this year's Academy, the original painting by Fred Roe, R.I., of which the above is a colour-photographic representation, was one of the pictures of the year, and attracted a great deal of attention, no less by its artistic excellence than by reason of the historic incident which it portrays. The picture is of an episode in the life of probably the most beloved of our National Heroes, and relates to a complimentary banquet at which Nelson was seated next to Benjamin West. He expressed admiration for the painter's "Death of General Wolfe," and asked West why he had painted no more such pictures. West replied that there were no more such subjects left, but that he feared Nelson's intrepidity would some day furnish him with an opportunity, which he would not lose. Nelson thereupon is said to have replied, "Then I hope I shall die in the next action." The subject is one which always makes a strong appeal to British sentiment—more particularly so at the present time—and the proprietors of Wright's Coal Tar Soap have, therefore, at very great expense, decided to issue a facsimile reproduction of the picture in colours, which is in every respect of the high standard fitting to the occasion and the subject. The reproduction, mounted as it is on best plate paper, size 33 in. by 27 in., is a most handsome picture, worthy to grace the walls of the most tasteful home. It will be sent FREE, securely packed, to users of WRIGHT'S Coal Tar Soap who send 24 outside wrappers from the 4d. tablets of the soap, together with 6d. to cover postage (inland). Foreign postage extra. Address: "Britain," Wright's Coal Tar Soap, 44-50, Southwark Street, London, S.E.

A

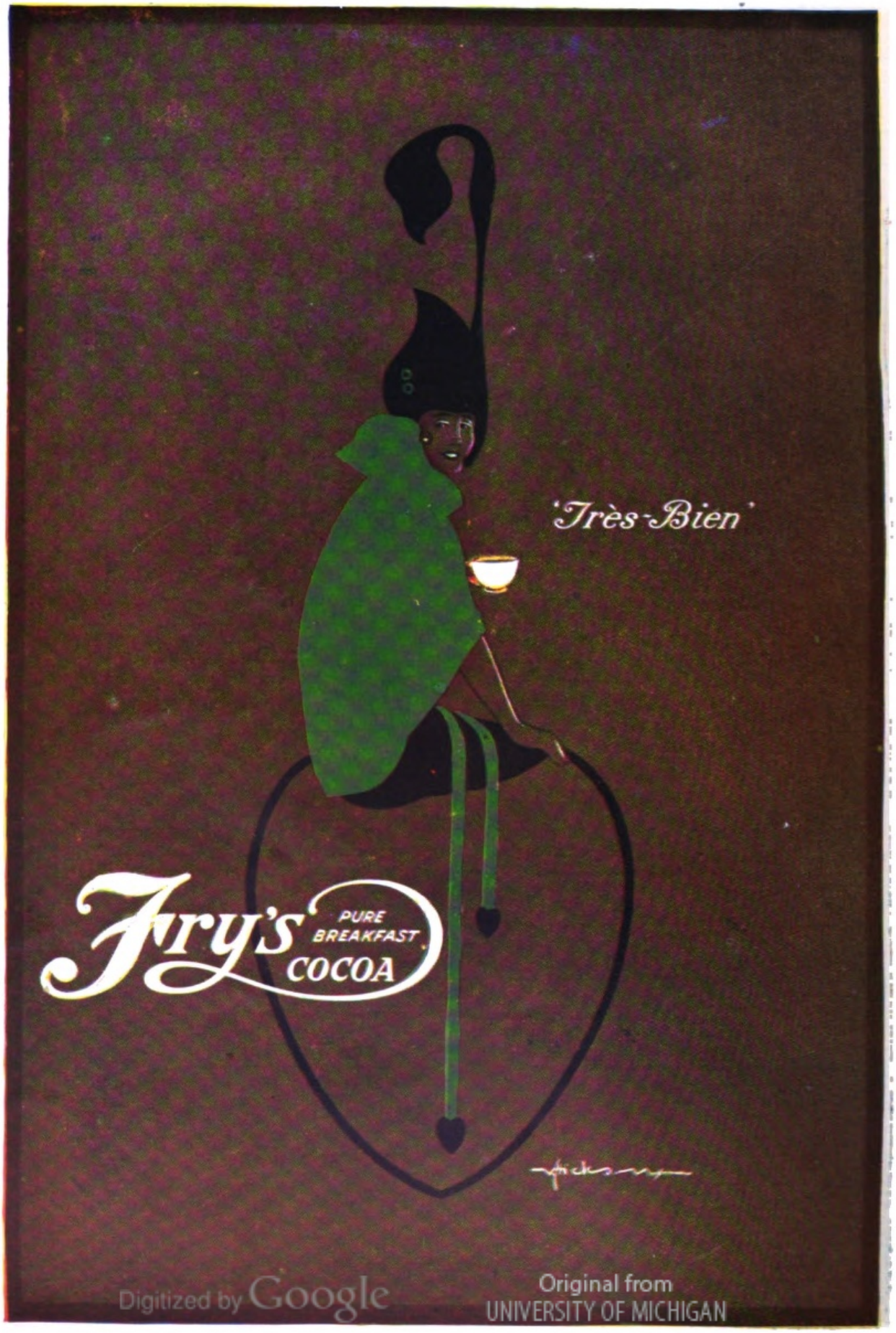
# STRIKING NEW NELSON PICTURE.

Particulars are given below of an offer of this splendid Picture, in large size, for framing,

**FREE OF CHARGE**

Every reader should secure one.

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Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN




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UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

# Thermos Flasks for the Forces



A boon companion to the Military Sentry and Special Constable on night duty.

Can *you* at home, comfortable, warm and well fed—thanks to our Navy—imagine anything more grateful than a hot drink in the grey, cold weather that our men are now experiencing during their ceaseless vigil in the North Sea? They may enjoy this if you send them a Thermos Flask as suggested by Lady Jellicoe.



Admiral Sir John Jellicoe says: "A Thermos Flask would be very welcome for every man in the fleet."

No more welcome gift could be sent to our brave soldiers at the front than a

## THERMOS FLASK

in which they can carry with them into the trenches a hot and comforting drink. The liquid in a Thermos Flask is unaffected by outside temperature. Boiling hot tea will keep hot in a Thermos for twenty-four hours—a godsend to every soldier in the firing line during the bitterly cold watches of the night.

**Thermos**
**FLASKS & JUGS**



Nothing so good as Thermos for First Aid in the Trenches.

Keep drinks steaming hot for 24 hours.

—

In posting, pack well and mark "FRAGILE."

—

**From all Jewellers, Chemists, Ironmongers, and Stores.**

*Wholesale only—*
*THERMOS, Ltd.,*
*8, Long Lane,*
*London, E.C.*



Thermos for the Wounded is invaluable.


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# FOR THE CHILDREN'S SAKE.

## The "STRAND MAGAZINE" CHRISTMAS TOY SCHEME

### (In Conjunction with "TIT-BITS")

for the little ones our Soldiers and Sailors have left behind them

## Your Help Urgently Needed to Give the Bairns a Happy Xmas.

There are over a million children in this country whose fathers will be spending Christmas fighting for King and Country. Their families at home must be given as good a time as possible, and we wish our readers to help us to be a veritable Santa Claus to the little ones.

### What we propose to do

is very simple, and everyone can help. We want our readers to send us

### as many toys as they can.

We want all kinds of toys—dolls with bright and chubby faces, war-horses with sturdy wooden legs, engines capable of drawing merriment from their little drivers, Noah's arks filled with animals more wonderful than are to be found in any menagerie, soldiers capable of striking terror into the ruthless heart of even the Kaiser himself. In fact, there is no toy manufactured which will not be appreciated. We feel sure that fathers and mothers who have witnessed the delight of their own children when they have jumped out of bed to see what Santa Claus had brought them will readily respond to our appeal for the youngsters of our brave defenders.

### It means little to the givers but much to the recipients.

## Will YOU Help?

We are ready at once to receive your gifts, and arrangements are in hand to deal with the sorting of the toys, making them up into parcels, and seeing as far as possible that in their distribution not a single child of a soldier or sailor at the front is neglected. We shall see to it that the toys are safely delivered into the hands of the children on Christmas Eve.

### Start Making, Buying, or Collecting Toys at Once.

*If you would prefer to send a postal order, we are quite prepared to purchase toys on your behalf, and you may be sure the money will be laid out to the best advantage.*

**Parcels of toys should be addressed to Santa Claus, "Strand Magazine" and "Tit-Bits" Offices, Southampton Street, Strand, LONDON, W.C.**

# SPLENDID XMAS GIFTS for friends at home, in the forces, or in distant lands.

# "SWAN" FOUNTPENS




The pens that give no trouble, start instantly, and require no preliminary adjustment.

**Booklet Post Free.**

## are gifts that are admired and put to practical use.

One must feel a certain pride and satisfaction in giving a **"SWAN,"** knowing it to be the simplest and strongest; knowing it will be appreciated as the standard best; knowing, too, that it will give true writing comfort every day for many years.

## HERE ARE A FEW PATTERNS—




Safety Pattern: Size 2C, with 18-ct. rolled gold plain, chased, or filigree band. **15/-**.




Ladies' Pattern: Size 1, with rolled gold or silver mounts and chain. **21/-**
Presentation Case included.



Standard Pattern: Size 1, Covered Silver, Engine Turned, **32/-**. Rolled Gold, **35/-**.
Presentation Case included.




The "Gnat" Stylo. The neatest Stylo made. Looks, feels, and writes just like a pencil.
**2/-**, or, by post, **2 1**

## BUY FROM YOUR STATIONER.

| | |
|---|---|
| Standard Pattern "Swans" from | 10/6 |
| Safety Pattern from | 12/6 upwards |
| Blackbird Pens | 5/- |
| Katydid Stylos | 3/6 |
| No. 2 Cygnet Stylos | 5/- |

***PLEASE WRITE FOR CATALOGUE.***

**MABIE, TODD & CO., 79 & 80, High Holborn, London, W.C.**
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# TO UNDERSTAND THE NEW PROBLEMS WHICH FACE US ALL SHOULD READ

# Public Opinion

***EDITED BY PERCY L. PARKER.***

PUBLIC OPINION'S greatly increased and increasing circulation since the war began shows that it fulfils a most useful purpose to-day by way of inspiration and information. It gives a magnificent analysis of all the great problems—social, political, financial, and religious—arising out of this War of Nations which will alter the whole of life for the present generation.

The world will have to begin a new chapter of living as the result of this war. Long after it is ended we shall be face to face with the most vital and tremendous problems of human conduct and activity which have ever engaged the human race.

A more consistent ethical line of conduct and a simpler method of life will be necessary all round if we are to come out of the ordeal successfully; and a tremendous reconstruction of human society on an ethical basis will be one of the most urgent duties of the day forced upon us by events.

The same strenuous efforts which are now put forward on the field of war will have to be applied to the organised life of society so that the voice of complaining may cease in our streets, and so that the splendid freehold of Great Britain may be worthy of its history and of the great sacrifices made to secure its safety. It behoves every one to know exactly what those problems are, and what the world's thinkers say as to their solution.

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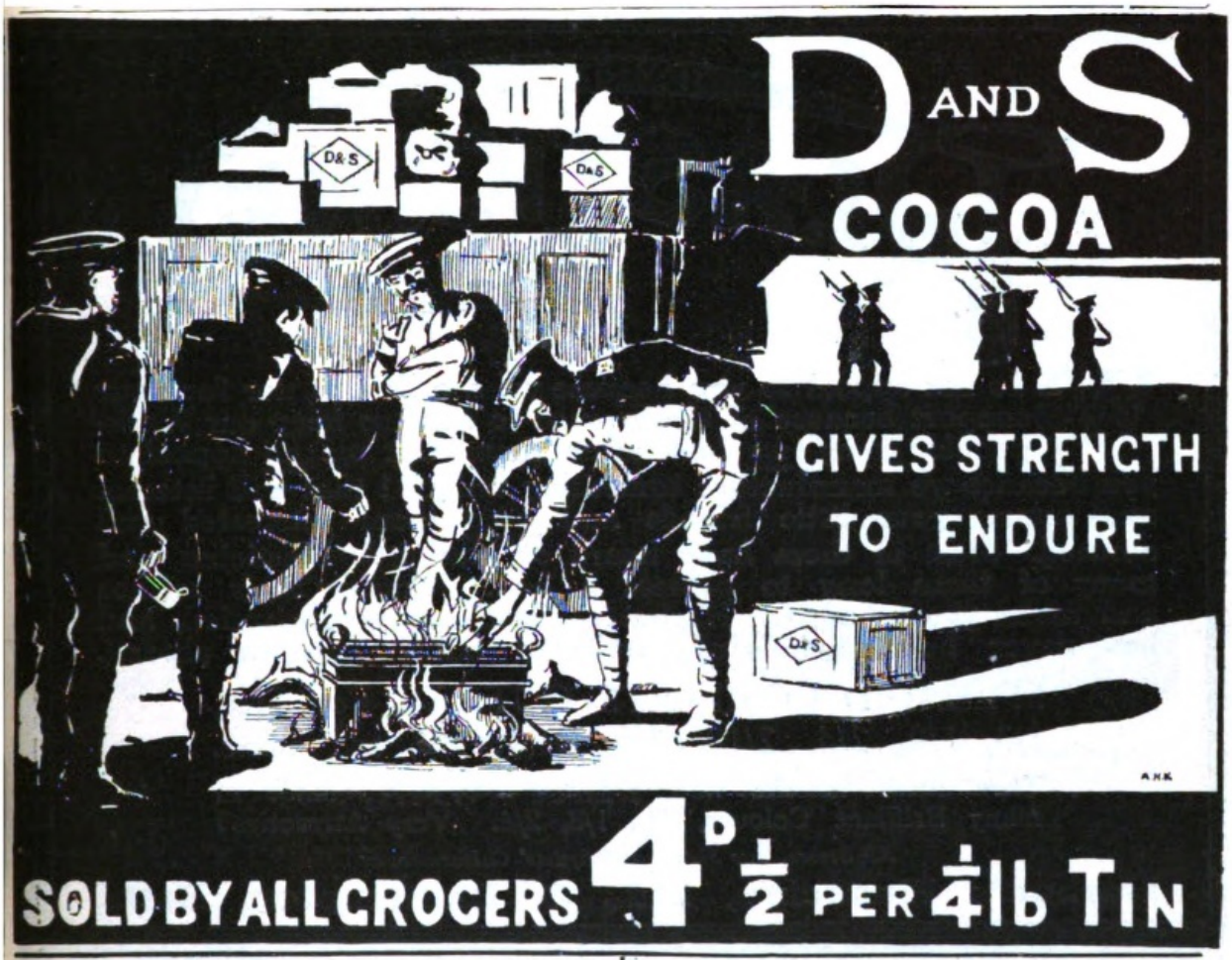
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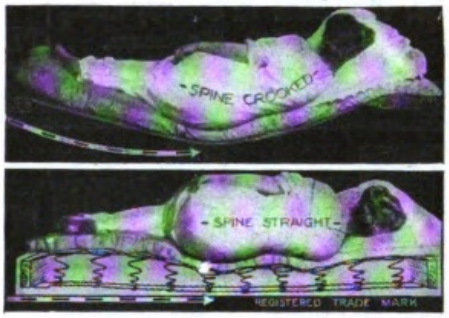

**would be a welcome gift to your Soldier brother or friend. The sustaining power of chocolate is known the world over. When on long marches, or in the trenches, it is sometimes difficult to get food. Vinello Chocolate would allay that sinking feeling that follows long fasting, as it is so nourishing and sustaining.**

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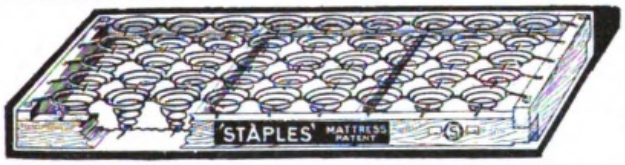
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THIS OFFER MAY NOT BE REPEATED.

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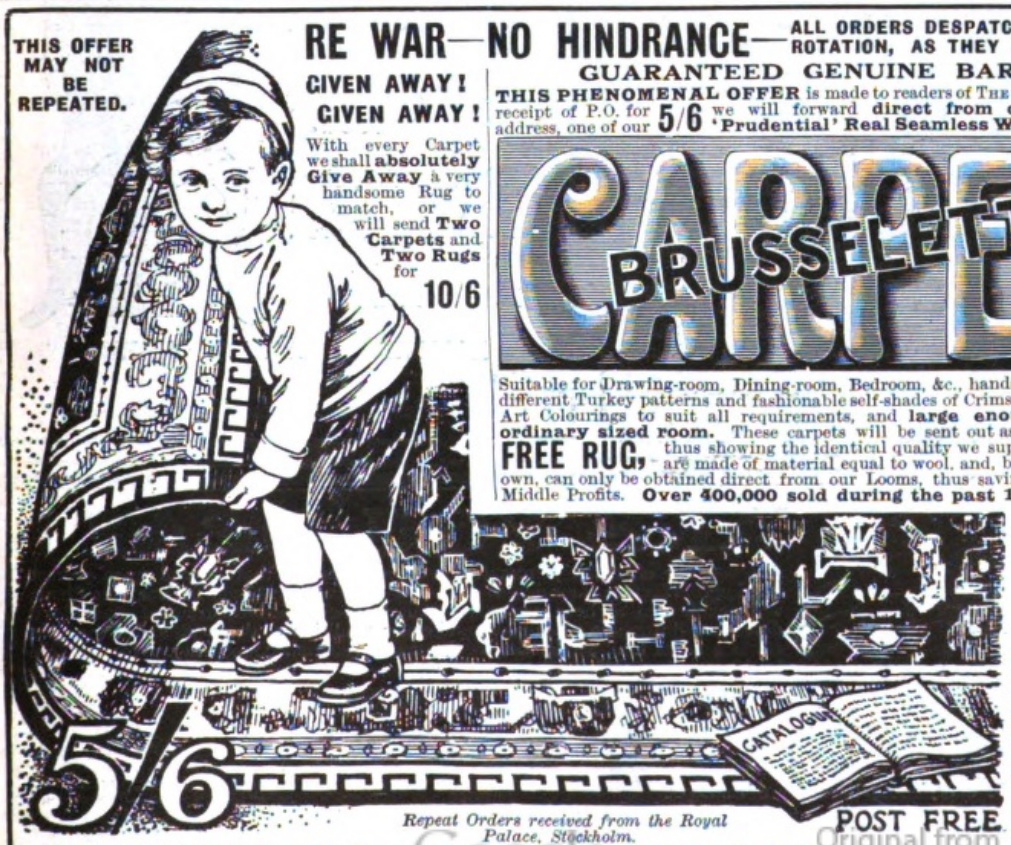
With every Carpet we shall **absolutely Give Away** a very handsome Rug to match, or we will send **Two Carpets** and **Two Rugs** for **10/6**

GUARANTEED GENUINE BARGAINS.

**THIS PHENOMENAL OFFER** is made to readers of THE STRAND, Dec., 1914. On receipt of P.O. for **5/6** we will forward **direct from our looms** to your address, one of our **'Prudential' Real Seamless Woven Half-Guinea**

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**THE VERY LATEST IN COTS—NOTHING LIKE IT IN THE WORLD**



PORTABLE AS A CAMP STOOL.

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**A PERFECT NEST FOR BABY**

Light—Comfortable—Hygienic—Portable. Affords healthy, natural sleep away from draughts. No hard substance to mar baby's comfort. Easily washable—no parts to rust—packs into small space for travelling.

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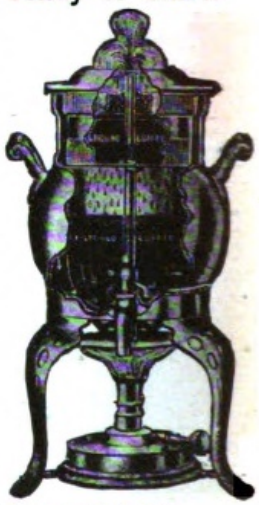
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Makes perfect Coffee, free from tannic acid, while any other Percolator is getting ready to start.

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THAT dignified taste which a leather-upholstered suite gives to a room, and which is so essentially British in its character, can be secured with a Rexine-covered suite at much less cost.

Rexine has every appearance of leather—it is an exact replica in grains and colouring.

But it is better than leather; it wears longer, does not crack or peel; is stain, grease, and scratch proof, and when soiled can be made like new by simply washing with soap and water.

**There is no other material to equal Rexine for furniture covering, and yet it costs only one quarter the price of leather.**

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Send your soldier friend a 4-lb. tin of dainty, creamy, Christmassy Toffee-de-Luxe. No evidence of your kind thoughts would please him better.

**5/- the Tin, or 1/4 the lb.**

*Sold by all Confectioners.*


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"Jason" ALL WOOL UNSHRINKABLE GIFT CHEQUE

Let the recipient of your Christmas Gift choose the "Jason" Stockings or Socks to his or her own taste. "Jason" Quality Stockings and Socks are sure to be acceptable—so comfy, fleecy, quite unshrinkable, and in such a choice range of new designs.

Take the cheque to a "Jason" Dealer—Men's Outfitter for presentation to a Gentleman—Ladies' Draper for presentation to a Lady. Give the signed cheque to your friend, who then chooses the "Jason" goods to his or her own taste.





**This Voucher will be accepted as full payment for "Jason" Stockings or Socks as specified below.** The holder may make a free choice from any of the numerous tasteful designs included in the specified range of "Jason" Stockings or Socks.

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Gift Cheque

Entitling the holder to box of "Jason" Stockings or Socks as follows

pairs Range Name of Firm

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**GIFT BOXES OF TWO PAIRS:**

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"Jason" "Elite" .. 4/-
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Advertising Dept. 16,
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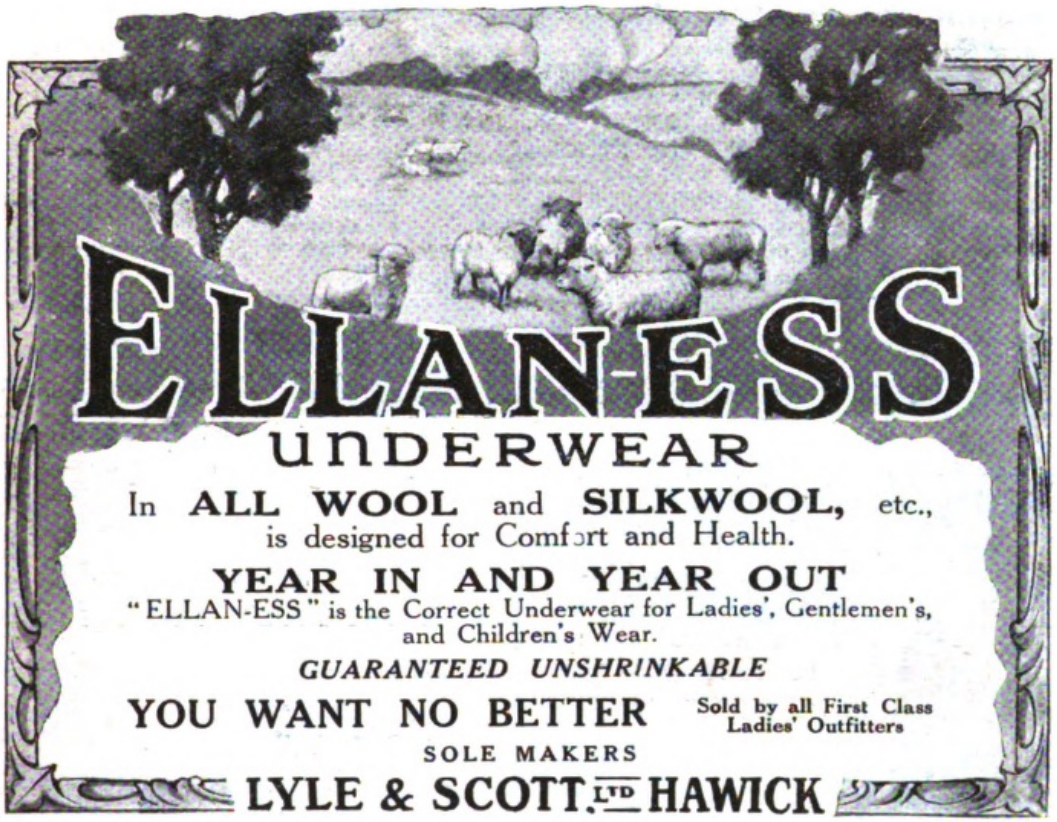



SEE DRI-PED TRADE MARK ◈ STAMPED EVERY FEW INCHES IN PURPLE ON EACH SOLE.

ABSOLUTELY WET PROOF NON-SLIPPING **DRI-PED** AND GIVES DOUBLE WEAR LIGHT & FLEXIBLE

THE "SUPER" LEATHER FOR SOLES


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## UNDERWEAR

In **ALL WOOL** and **SILKWOOL,** etc.,
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**YEAR IN AND YEAR OUT**
"ELLAN-ESS" is the Correct Underwear for Ladies', Gentlemen's, and Children's Wear.

***GUARANTEED UNSHRINKABLE***

**YOU WANT NO BETTER**

**Sold by all First Class Ladies' Outfitters**

SOLE MAKERS

**LYLE & SCOTT, LTD HAWICK**



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OWING to the War leather is dearer and the prices of boots will have to go up in the near future. Meanwhile, the Lotus manufacturers, who are making no change in prices, so long as their reserve stock of leather lasts, take this opportunity to advise purchasers that it is more prudent to buy at normal rates now than to wait longer and pay more. ***Buy now and pay now.*** Ready money is needed by dealers and manufacturers alike, in the one case to replenish stocks, in the other to keep workers on full-time wages, and so preserve the steadiness of trade. Therefore to buy at once and to pay at once is both prudent and patriotic.

Lotus are obtainable in every district from duly appointed agents.

Letters

Lotus Ltd, Stafford

Manufacturers of Delta and Lotus Shoes



Delta 17/9

No. 200 Box Calf Derby Boots for Men.
*Les prix n'ont pas changé depuis le commencement de la guerre.*


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in an exact miniature of the British Sailor's Uniform. Every detail correct, and every suit cut and finished by our expert Naval workers, & made to measure from the

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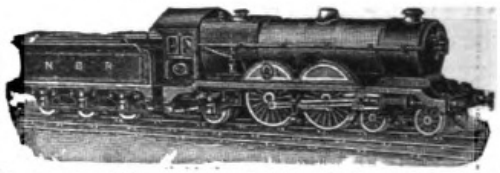


Illustration shows our Scale Model of N.B.R. Loco, "The Flying Scotsman." Fitted with Boiler with Tubes, with Superheater, **Stevenson's Link motion,** Pressure Gauge, etc. Length 26in., Gauge III. = 2½in. Price **£7 15s. 6d.** With Strong Tinplate Oval Railroad, 9½in. × 14ft., **£8 5s.,** carriage free. ALL BRITISH MADE.

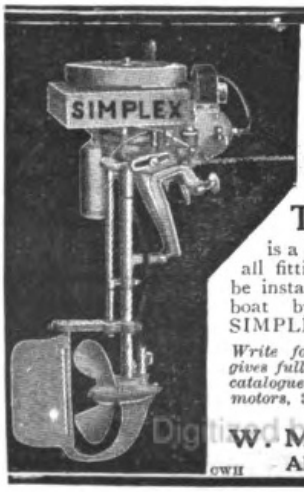
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**Model Engineers, Yacht Builders and Electricians,**
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If you are, the SIMPLEX Detachable Row Boat Motor will appeal to you.

## The "SIMPLEX"

is a petrol motor, complete with all fittings. Any small boat can be instantly converted into a motor boat by simply attaching the SIMPLEX.

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The Neptune Fountain Pen is the ideal Christmas Gift for Britons, because it is not only the best fountain pen that money can buy, but is, moreover, *British* from first to last. Materials — labour — employees — shareholders — everything is British.

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**"ROYSSE"**

**Carpets and Rugs** are made to required sizes in plain self colours of any art shade. Well adapted for stairs, landings, complete floor coverings, or for surrounds. Decidedly preferable to the plain felt carpeting, being porous, and therefore more in accordance with hygienic rules.—*Guaranteed all Wool.*

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Small Patterns and Handbook of Carpet Squares and Rugs Free.

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**100 PAGE ILLUSTRATED LIST FREE.**

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Our teeth are still sound, and what a blessing at *our* age. Periodically we use a Zepto Pencil after we have cleansed our teeth in the usual way.

Zepto removes Tartar that your tooth-brush never reaches. It prevents decay —and consequent unpleasant breath. You will be delighted to see how pearly white Zepto can keep your teeth.

**ZEPTO, the ANTISEPTIC TARTAR REMOVER**

**Lasts many months — costs but 9d.**

***Use it always for dental plates.***

Of all Chemists and Stores, or post free from Thos. CHRISTY & CO., 4 Old Swan Lane, London, E.C.




The Hall-Mark of Quality — F.H&W.S — Your Guarantee

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**THE "BURLINGTON" BRAND** is the recognised standard of excellence among Smart City Men, and is a true guarantee of quality and value. It comprises a variety of the most modern styles and shapes, so constructed as to contribute in every way to the health, comfort, convenience, and all-round contentment and satisfaction of the wearer.



**15/6**

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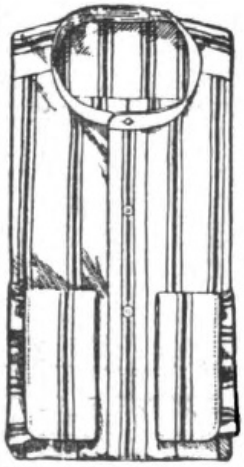
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**Samuels' are the Largest Mail Order Hosiers, and we cannot afford a dissatisfied customer. Everything sent carriage paid United Kingdom—carriage extra abroad. All goods sold under guarantee—Satisfaction or Money Returned.**



## "Royal" Flannel Shirts.

**4/9** each; **3** for **14/-**

Made in the very best materials, in handsome, fast colour designs, and cut by expert Shirt Tailors. Guaranteed unshrinkable.

*When ordering state size of collar and whether single or double cuffs are required.*

**WONDERFUL 30/- HOSIERY OUTFIT.**

For **30/-** we send Goods usually retailing at £2 2s.

**3** Singlets, best natural wool, light, medium, or Winter weight.
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*When sending order please state chest and waist measurement and size of collar worn.*

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## "Jayaness" Pyjamas.

**4/9** a Suit.

Carefully cut on anatomical lines, they are so comfortable that they positively induce sleep.

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**FREE** Catalogue, containing many hundreds of Bargains, will show you the advantage of dealing with us. **Write for it to-day.**

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# BILLIARDS FOR THE HOME

**The "CHALLENGE"** (Patent No. 22642/12).

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5ft. 5in. by 2ft. 11in.... **£10 0 0**
6ft. 6in. ,, 3ft. 6in.... **12 12 0**
7ft. 4in. ,, 4ft. 0in. **15 10 0**
8ft. 6in. ,, 4ft. 6in.... **21 10 0**

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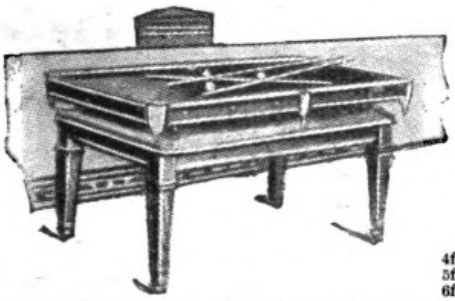


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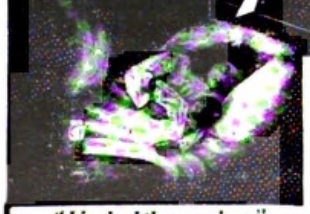
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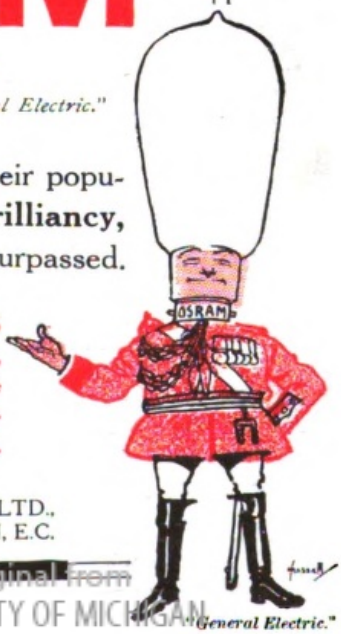
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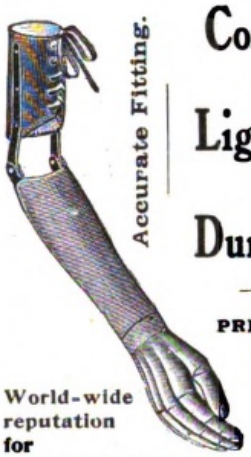

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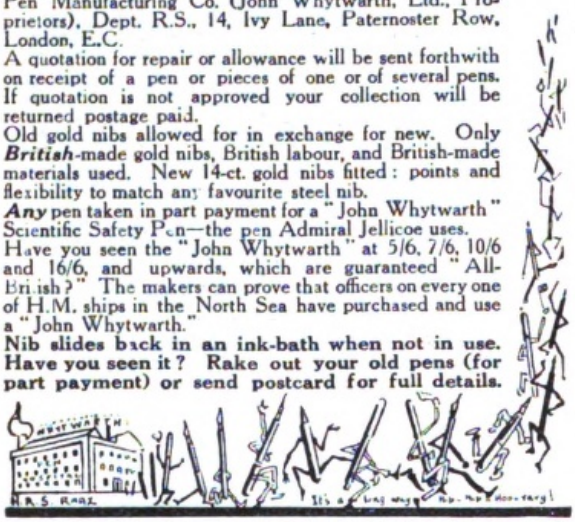
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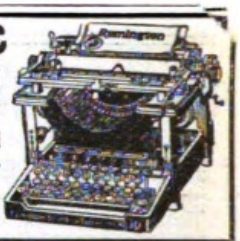
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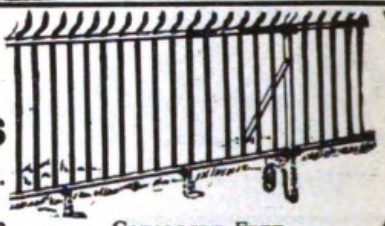
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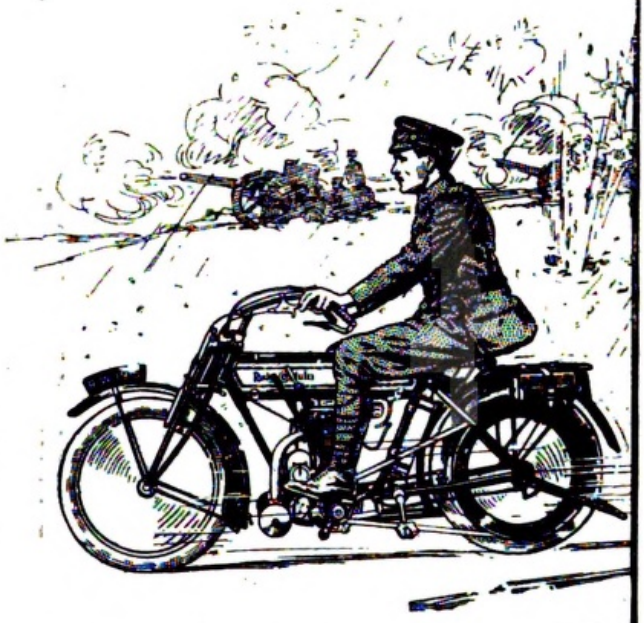



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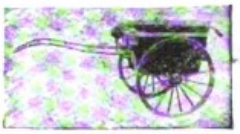
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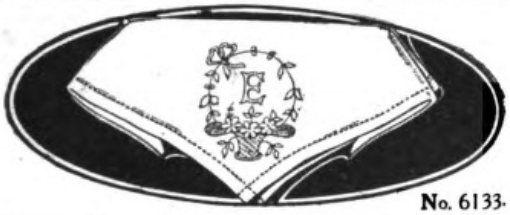
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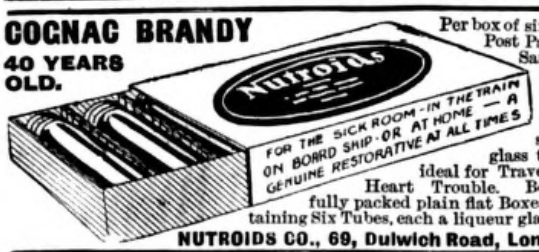
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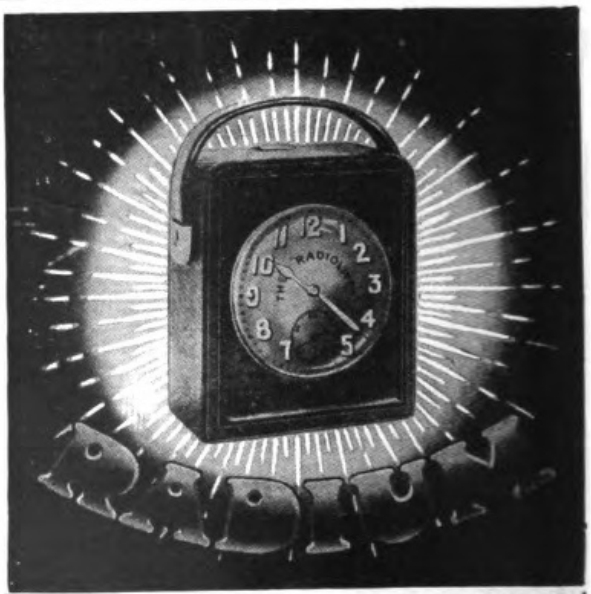
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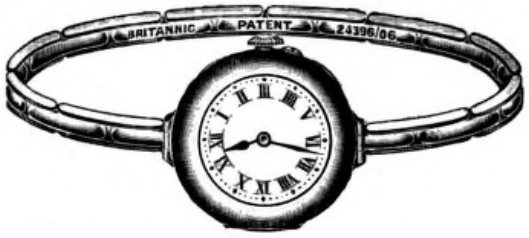
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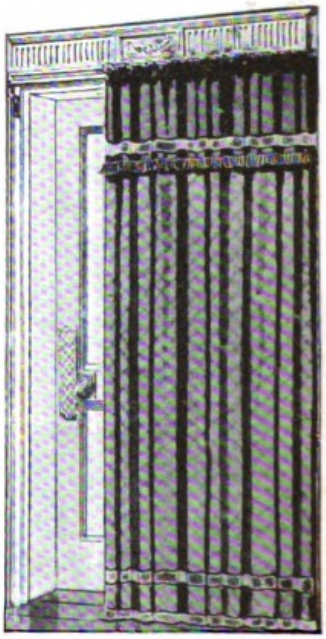
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# THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

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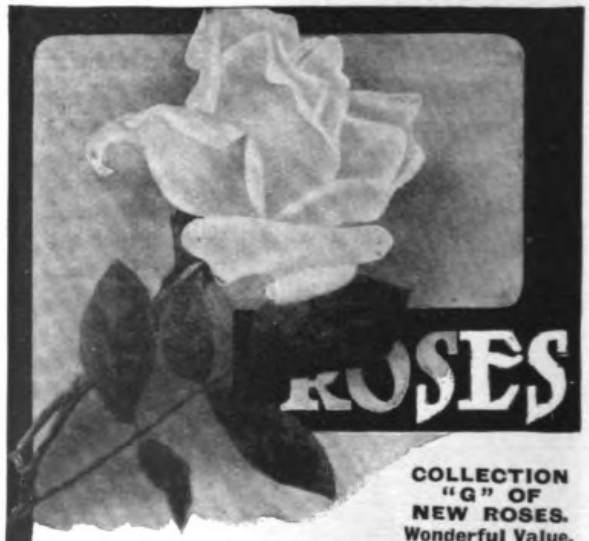
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# Miss Gladys Cooper Explains Some Beauty Secrets.

## *The Popular London Star Favours Simple Methods.*

I have been asked to give a few simple recipes that I know, either through personal use or by observation, to be valuable to the toilet, and which are within the reach of the average woman. In these days of £100 facial treatments and elaborate and expensive beautifying processes my suggestions may read like lessons in economy, but they are not especially so intended. They are merely practical suggestions, in which the keynote is "effectiveness." All the materials or ingredients which I mention are either already at hand in the home or may be readily procured from the chemist. Fortunately I do not suffer from the ailments or troubles enumerated below, but some people who are not so fortunate have told me their experiences, and with your permission I will set forth some remedies which they have found to be efficacious.

### Complexion Renewals.

Complexion experts advise me that a normal, healthy complexion is constantly renewing itself by dropping off tiny flakes of worn-out tissue, thus revealing the fresh young skin underneath. They say that when this process is checked by age, exposure, or some of many causes, the complexion becomes dull and ugly. The rational treatment recommended is to help the skin perform the natural functions of "shedding" worn-out tissue. For this purpose, I am informed, there is nothing so good as pure mercolized wax, used for a few nights, just as you would use a face cream. It is claimed that it possesses a special affinity for the effete scarf-skin, which it quickly removes by absorbing it. The face, I am assured, will soon look much younger and prettier under this treatment.

### The Curling Iron.

Don't use a hot iron to curl your hair. Some of my friends make the cunningest sort of curls wherever they want them simply by dampening the hair with liquid silmerine before retiring at night. When the hair is dry in the morning it will be softly curly just where you want it to be. This method is perfectly harmless, even beneficial to the hair, and the curls last a long time. The liquid is quite pleasant, and neither sticky nor greasy.

### How to Shampoo.

Most women, I am informed, do not know how to use stallax properly when shampooing with it. Unless the hair is naturally very oily, a stallax shampoo may sometimes leave it rather dry. But I am told if you will apply olive-oil freely to your hair and scalp just before shampooing with stallax, the result is most delightful. The hair will be left clean, soft, bright, and wavy, the olive-oil having properly balanced the action of this wonderful hair cleanser.

### Care of the Hair.

Dandruff, I am told, is the greatest enemy of the hair. I am informed that in many cases no hair tonic is needed, if only the scalp can be properly cleared and kept free from dandruff. Nature will usually do the rest. I believe a very excellent and very simple remedy for dandruff is a lotion which can be made up at home merely by mixing two ounces of the pure extract of barsyde with three ounces of bay rum. Rub into the scalp occasionally with the finger-tips. The prompt and thorough manner in which it clears off the dandruff and stimulates the scalp is quite remarkable, so they tell me.

### Grey Hair.

I have observed many attempts of many people to conceal grey hair. Some of these experiments were amusing, some disastrous, and some were successful. Personally, I believe I shall let my hair turn when the appointed time comes, but if I were going to try to evade it I would give a trial to a real old "grandmother" formula that would probably do the work. This formula, I am informed, has been used with degrees of success for many generations, and consists merely of one ounce of concentrate of tammalite mixed with four ounces of bay rum. It is applied to the grey hair a few times with a small sponge, and ladies tell me it appears to darken the hair to a natural shade, not like a dye, but gradually and naturally.



Miss GLADYS COOPER.

### Miscellaneous Hints.

A few useful hints from my friends on aids to beauty are as follows:—

The eyebrows and lashes may be made to grow stronger and darker by applying mennaline, a specially delicate pomade, with the finger-tips at night.

Rouge is often obvious, and many women therefore prefer to use powdered colliandum, which gives a most natural tint.

The lips may be prevented from drying and chapping by touching them with a stick of prolactum, which also gives them a good colour.

Freckles are most effectively combated with ammoniated mercury creams, of which jettaline is the best.

Gladys Cooper

---

NOTE.—This interesting article on beauty culture in general was written by Miss Gladys Cooper at the request of the manufacturers of Pilenta Soap — the best complexion soap in the world. On sale at all chemists.—[ADVT.]




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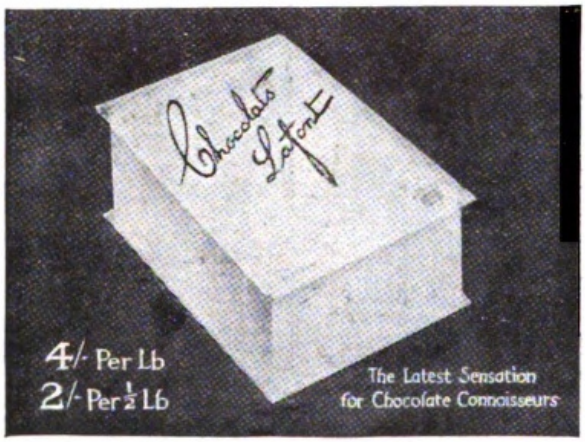


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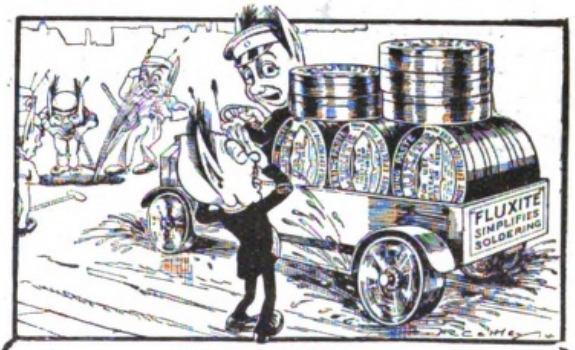
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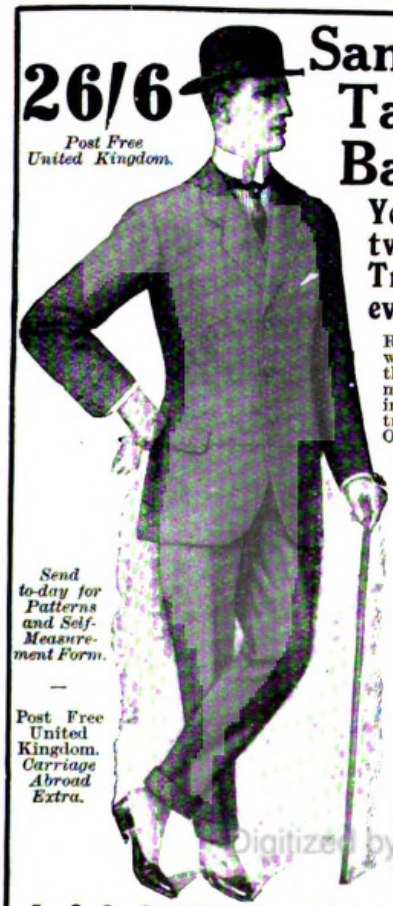
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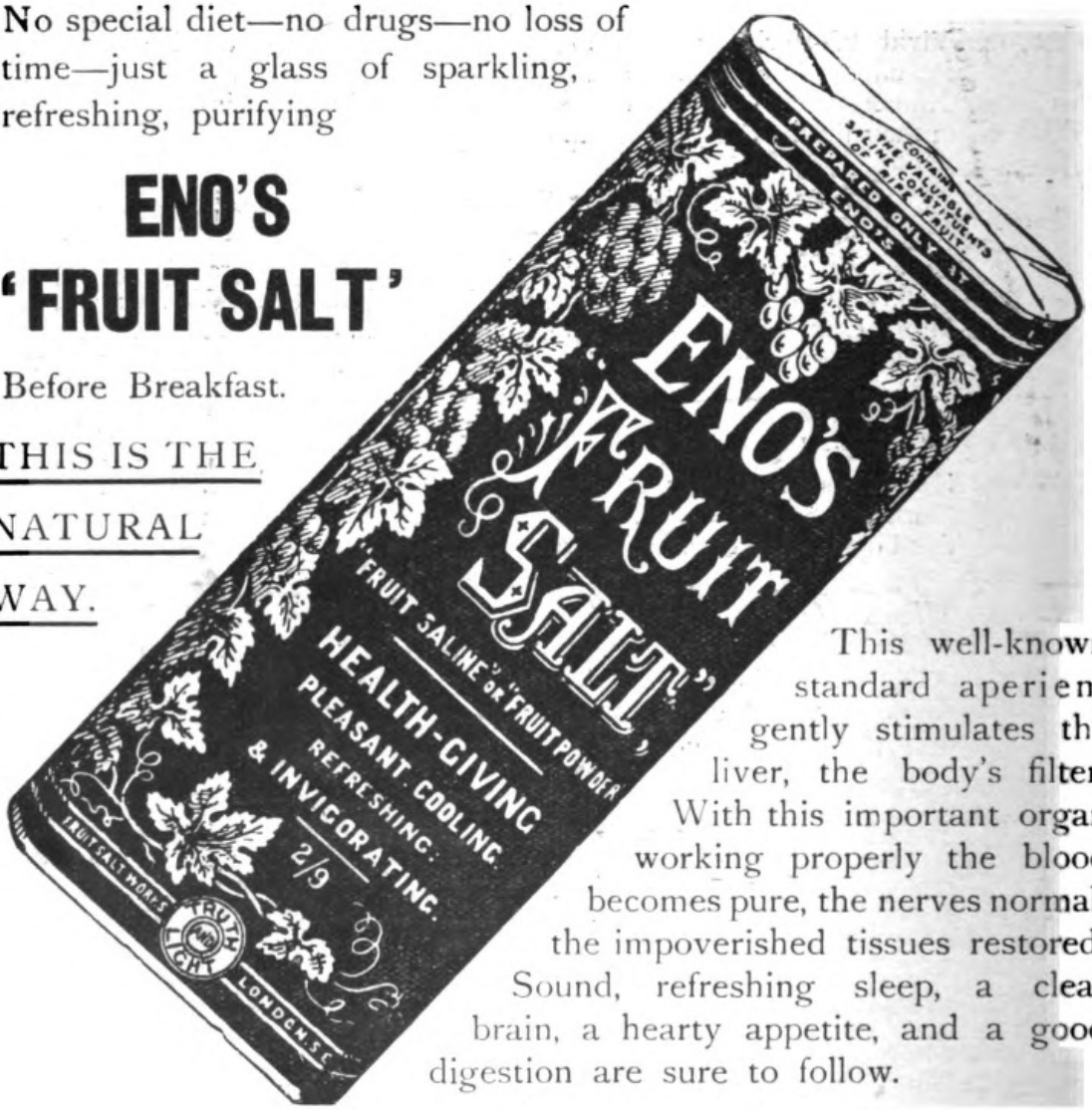
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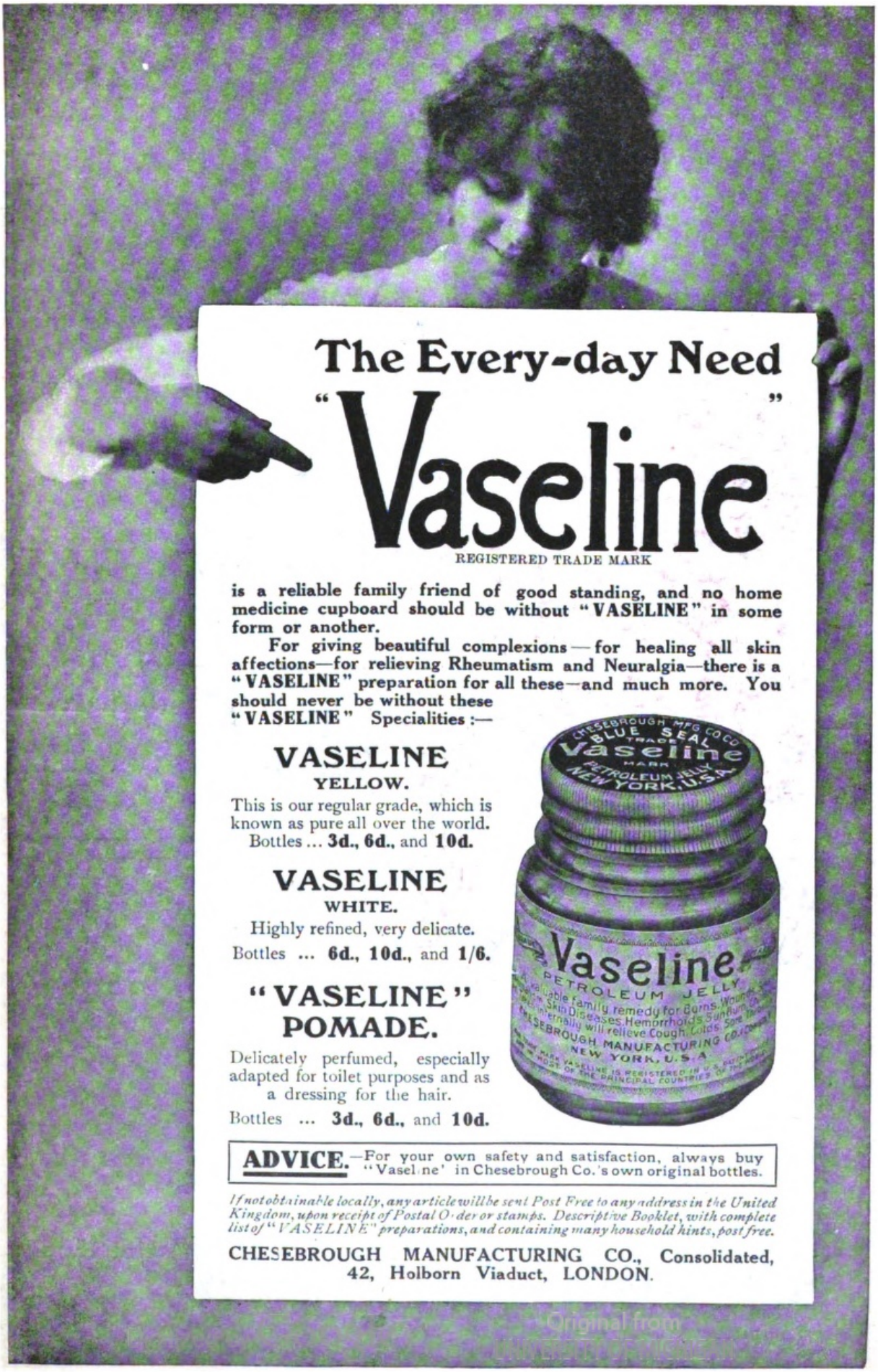
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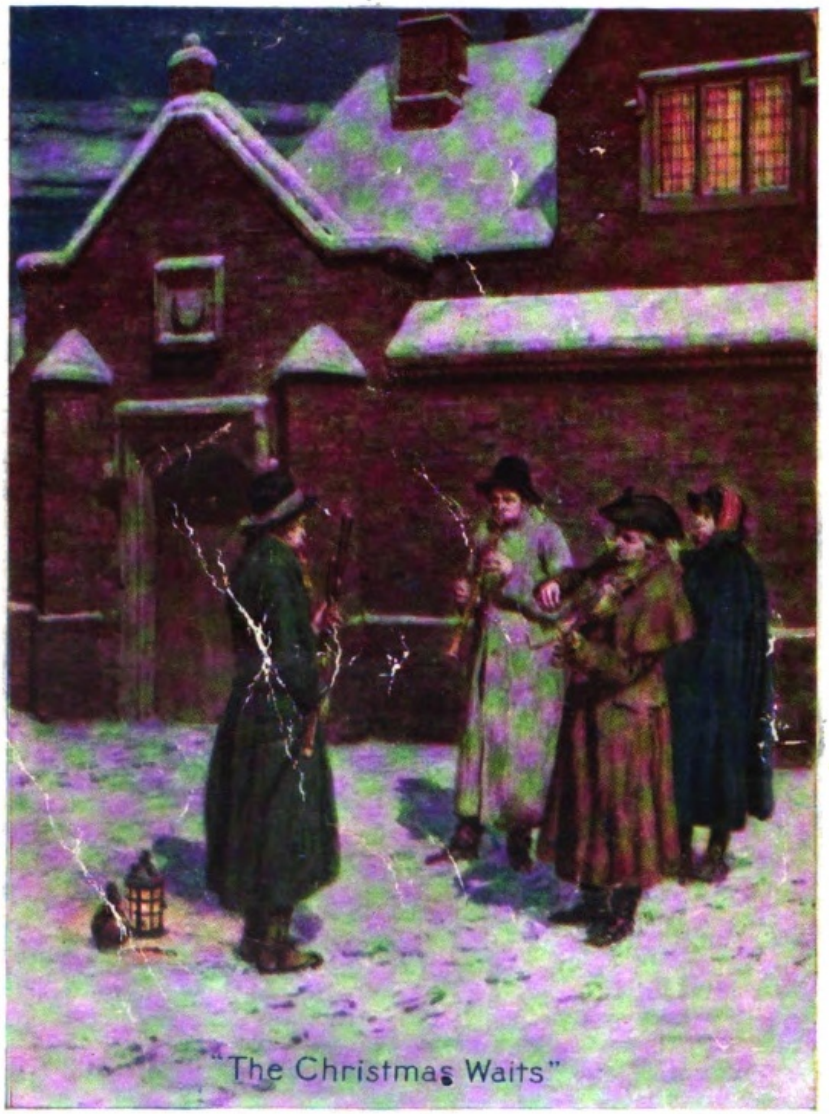
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